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Beginning...

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by

W. J. Passingham

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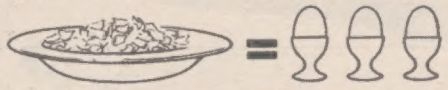

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The PASSING SHOW
No. 327 Vol. 7. JUNE 25, 1938

I shall always maintain that the world changed at the moment I saw a small meteorite drop sheer out of the heavens

WORLD WITHOUT TIME

SKIPPER

THORMANSON

TINY

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WENDERBY

Beginning an unusual story of romance and high adventure; the story of a strange world and still stranger peoples. Weird is the word for this, the latest and greatest serial

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY T. GRAINGER JEFFREY

SOMEBODY murdered Thormanson and you know who did it, Sammy!" The editor ceased waving a warning finger, sat back in his chair. "You've already admitted that you saw what happened when——"

"Yes, but think of the others, chief," I protested.

"Of whom, exactly?" he questioned. "I've spoken with Wenderby, with Captain Barley and with Milton's parents. They all agree that the truth should be told about Ooloom and you—who ought to know better—are holding the greatest story that ever came my way because a traitor was executed without the law."

"I still can't see your point," I persisted. "The scientists, the astronomers, mathematicians and the rest have told all there is to know about the change that destroyed the old order of things. Why hang on to an overdone subject?"

"They've certainly told us all they know," he agreed. "We know, now, that the world changed in a single hour of the night and will never be the same again. After the night of Sunday, January 15th, the world was without time. But modern science soon discovered what had happened, and on January 18th, they gave us a new calendar.

"In spite of all you've learned in this office since you left school, Sam Killick, you've failed to see the angle of your own story. We want to know what happened when a party of people were cut off from the rest of the world in a disabled ship, alone in the South Atlantic Ocean, without wireless and without news of the catastrophe—without Time to make a true nautical reckoning."

"But don't you see, chief, they're all friends of mine. Think of 'Tiny' Milton's parents!"

"So it was Milton, eh?"

"I didn't say so. Look here——"

"Stop!" The editor leaned forward in his chair again and spoke impressively. "Who taught you your business as a journalist?" he demanded.

"You, of course," I admitted, readily.

"Have I ever let you down about the right or wrong of any story you've written for me?"

"I—I don't think so."

"Go straight home, Sammy," he said quietly, "and get on with that story right away. I shall want copy from you on the first of next month. Now get going . . ."

I left him then without another word. You see, in our game the editor is always right. . . .

You will naturally want to know how I, a hard-working journalist, came to be in the company of a millionaire like James Henry Wenderby and his friends, aboard the yacht *Solar Star*. I first met him at the side of the New York Central railroad, only a few miles from the city, at a moment when his whole world was shattered by the tragic death of both parents in the worst disaster the States had known for a decade.

By a stroke of sheer luck I had managed to get away from the crowd around the tangled engines and find a telephone. My story was in the office when I came out again on to the track for a last look round, and saw a man sitting on the embankment with his head in his hands. It was Jimmy Wenderby—stunned with grief and shock.

I was able to do something, not much, but Jimmy never forgot it. Afterwards, we often met and talked, while complicated legal affairs kept him almost a prisoner in New York. He was a rich man now. Jimmy's mother was the daughter and heiress of old Jacob van Druyden, the famous banker, and his father was Sir William Wenderby of the British Diplomatic Service. It seems that the railroad disaster ended an ideal partnership, as well as the glorious years of care-free youth for an only son. Not all the millions he inherited from his mother, and an additional income from his father's considerable property in England, compensated James Wenderby for the loss of his parents.

He held a grudge against Fate after that, developed a streak of bitterness which threatened to mar a generous and lovable character. You could see the lines deepening in his face. In those days, people who didn't know the story made mistakes about Jimmy Wenderby. To all outward appearance there was nothing to account for his moodiness. He was not only a millionaire, but good to look at. About five feet ten inches in height and built to proportion, he presented a conventional picture of the healthy young man—conventional, that is, until a closer acquaintance revealed certain contradictions. At twenty-six Jimmy looked ten years older.

When at last his legal affairs were settled and his constant presence in New York no longer necessary, the lawyers persuaded him to take a holiday. So Jimmy fitted out a yacht called the *Solar Star* for a

(please turn over)

long voyage among the South Pacific islands and invited three friends to join him. I had the shock of my life when I received an invitation, and decided at once that I would be out of place in such company. Besides, how could I ask the old man for leave?

Imagine my surprise when the editor sent for me, almost ordered me to join James Wenderby's party. It was Jimmy who pulled the strings, of course.

"You never know what might happen among such a crowd," the editor explained. "A front-page story, maybe, and with you on the spot. . ."

And how damned right he was! Something happened all right, but the news was not with us. The whole world was out of step and we didn't know it!

Aboard the yacht, I was introduced to Doctor George Thormanson, 'Tiny' Milton and Captain John Barley. We sailed from 'Frisco, a rather subdued and sober party. Somehow we never seemed able to get together. Jimmy was unusually quiet and I suppose his moodiness had a part in our inability to settle down. But the real trouble was Thormanson and I sensed difficulties in that quarter from the beginning. Thormanson was deep—too deep for the rest of us. He was a Harvard product, a doctor of science and, like many another with abilities in the academic line, his constant attitude of superiority made him a confounded nuisance among normal people.

To Jimmy he was an annoyance as well as a first cousin, and I had it in mind that Thormanson nursed hard feelings about the van Druyden millions, now in Jimmy's possession. Just how Jimmy came to invite him aboard the *Solar Star*, I never discovered. But he was one of us—and one who never ceased to make his presence felt. Thormanson was the van Druyden type—an inch taller than Jimmy, with dark hair and eyes in opposition to the Wenderby flaxen and blue. A pompous piece of business, overbearing, and you couldn't get to the bottom of him—clever, too; so damned clever that after a few minutes' conversation a kick in the pants seemed to be the only answer.

'Tiny' Milton, six feet tall in his socks, fair like Jimmy, well over the 200 lb. mark, was another proposition altogether. You just had to like 'Tiny', perhaps because he was wide open—too big and lazy to conceal his true feelings about anything. He was the laziest cuss I've ever met, the kindest and most contented. When he smiled you could see the laughter rising slowly from deep down inside him until it creased and dimpled his fat face like a full and pleasant moon. 'Tiny' moved his great carcase only when movement was necessary to existence. He was the big buffer between Jimmy's moodiness and Thormanson's superiority complex—the medium through which I could always enter their company and conversation without the slightest embarrassment.

Then there was Captain John Barley, grey-haired and grey-eyed, about fifty I should say, and a big man in stature as well as outlook, with some thirty-five years spent in the ways of the sea and of men to keep us entertained from daylight to dark if we needed it. Thormanson hated the sight of him, as is often the case when mere learning meets wisdom, but if old John sensed this animosity he gave no sign. Having such a man as John Barley in charge we felt no anxiety and were free to enjoy ourselves.

Thus the events of that fateful night of Sunday, January 15th, appeared the more extraordinary to me. For the first time at sea I saw, by the yellow light of a binnacle-lamp, fear in the weathered face of John Barley, as he stood beside the quarter-master on the bridge of the *Solar Star*. Don't think this was the first piece of bad weather we struck on the voyage. Far from it! At first, everything went smoothly, just as we had planned. We basked in the glorious South Pacific sunshine, visited the islands, explored, bathed—and all the rest of it. Farther south we met bad weather—unexpected storms which drove the yacht round Cape Horn and into the South Atlantic with the speed of a crack liner. The captain then decided to call at the Falklands for stores and minor repairs.

Two days after leaving the Falkland Islands Jimmy Wenderby decided to end the voyage by making for New York and he came to this decision early on the Sunday morning. I think we were all rather pleased about it, because the weather had spoiled the holiday. At about noon, that day, we were battling our way through heavy seas which kept us below decks. Throughout the afternoon we played cards, smoked and cursed the weather. Thormanson was annoying Jimmy with his endless arguments. Everybody's nerves were frayed for want of fresh air and I cleared out to my cabin lest a growing temptation to kick Thormanson in the ribs took the upper hand. It was about seven o'clock in the evening, and we were being tossed about like a matchbox. On two occasions I felt the *Solar Star* shaken from end to end when her propeller raced free from the water.

I found myself thinking of the news-room and the daily grind as a pleasant prospect. There was nothing to do except sleep and I slept until a crash on the deck above awoke me. My watch registered a quarter to midnight. I dressed hurriedly, put on an oilskin and made my way cautiously up the saloon stairs to the deck. Beyond the bridge, two men were lashing something securely in its place. The sea came charging upon us in swift masses of slate-grey, crested with phosphorescent fire. A warning shout reached me faintly from the bridge, where Captain Barley stood beside the quarter-master at the wheel. I gripped a rail to steady myself.

Then came the lightning!

Never have I witnessed such a fearsome display of celestial fireworks. High in the dark heavens, streaks of blue fire crackled and exploded in bewildering patterns of blinding intensity. The world seemed to wilt beneath terrific attacks from the terrible forces outside of it. I stood at the head of the saloon stairway, holding on to a rail with both hands for what seemed an age, until the climax came. . . .

The scientists may talk themselves unconscious about the exact time, but I shall always maintain that the world changed at the moment I saw a small meteorite drop sheer out of the heavens—a rustling, golden streak of fire against a black velvet back-

The plane roared low over the *Solar Star* and finally dropped flat on a calm sea just to leeward of the ship. The roof of the control cabin slid back and a figure appeared, waving to us urgently. A voice from the plane hailed us—the voice of a woman!

ground of utter darkness. I watched the swift, awesome descent until it disappeared into the void far astern of the yacht—just as a following sea curled like a living thing over the foredeck of the *Solar Star*. The ship shuddered from stem to stern as her propeller rose clear of the water and her engines raced madly for the last time that night.

There followed an ominous metallic rattle below decks and then a strange, tense silence—a loss of vibration, when the engines stopped. In the queer hush that followed after weeks of familiar, friendly sound at sea, Captain Barley's voice rapped out an order to the man at the wheel with startling clarity. Fear came to me when I realised that the ship's heart had ceased beating, that she was rolling helplessly in the trough of huge seas. Sea broke over her in dark-green floods just then, until she was brought round to face head on the long rollers of the South Atlantic Ocean. After that, time had no meaning while I crouched there at the top of the saloon stairs.

I was brought to a sense of my surroundings by a sudden signal from Captain Barley. Then I crept forward, cautiously, to the stairs leading up to the bridge and started to climb. . . . When I reached the captain's side, he said :

"We're in no danger, Mr. Killick."

"But haven't the engines stopped?"

"Yes. But they'll be started again. The storm is dying fast. Look over there!"

He pointed to a patch of grey in the heavens, faint as yet, but growing lighter, and at first I did not understand—never dreamed how long I had stood holding on for dear life at the top of the saloon stairway.

"Dawn," the captain said and I could hardly believe him.

It was a grey, sombre dawn breaking over a vast expanse of ocean, outlining the white-painted hull of the *Solar Star* so that she appeared to ride the long swell of the sea like a phantom ship. I had an uneasy feeling that there was danger, could not shake the idea off as I gazed into the heavens. For the strangest journey I had ever made was the short climb up the stairs to the bridge—only a few moments ago!

I just can't explain exactly how I felt as I made my way from the saloon hatch to the foot of the bridge stairway. The fact remains that in spite of stiffness in every limb, caused by my standing for hours clinging to a rail in the cold hours before dawn, I had felt myself floating up those few stairs like—well, like a confounded fairy!

No, I was quite sober. Hours of exposure on deck while the elements went stark crazy must have sobered any man. Something was wrong! I didn't want to make a fool of myself just then, and kept silent about my queer experience.

Heavy feet mounting the iron stairway leading to the bridge interrupted my uneasy thoughts and I turned to recognise the begrimed features and bloodshot eyes of the engineer. The captain was evidently awaiting him and put his first question abruptly.

"Well? How long, Davy?"

"I ain't so sure," the engineer confessed. "At least a week—maybe longer. Things ain't so good downstairs, John. The trouble's in the main propeller-shaft bearing. Happened when she rolled herself clear that last time.

"A week or more, eh!" growled John Barley. "We've had no luck aboard this ship since we left the Falklands. And now we're adrift!"

"Say, what's biting you, John?" Davy demanded. "We're adrift. So what? Ain't the *Solar Star* sound all through, well fitted and with everything we want to get her going again?"

"Listen!" snapped the captain. "Just give yourself a chance to know all that's gone wrong. Young Amos can't get a sound out of that box of tricks in the wireless cabin. The blasted radio's burned out! Lightning, he says. He says he'll have to re-wind something or other, and it'll take him a long time."

During the short pause that followed, the darkness was pregnant with John Barley's discomfiture. I could sense his doubt and confusion and wondered. When he spoke again my wonderment increased.

"Don't you feel there's something wrong yourself, Davy? I don't mean with the ship exactly, but with . . ." His voice trailed off hopelessly into silence.

"Wrong!" the engineer echoed. "With yourself? Well, I . . ." Davy seemed to find expression difficult now. "When I come to think of it there is something wrong about here. Reckon I felt it coming over me about an hour ago. Kind of light-headed, it you follow me. I—I ran up the stairs just now, all the way from the engine-room, like I used to do, years ago, as a youngster."

"You've said it!" There was a hint of relief in the captain's voice as he listened to this confession and I took courage.

"I didn't like to say so before," I said, slowly, "but I seemed to dance up those stairs as though they weren't there. There is something wrong, John. I feel I could trip around the deck like a ballet dancer."

Davy stared at me, and scratched his head.

"See you later," I said briefly, and left the captain and his engineer to talk over the situation.

Now that the engines had stopped the ship seemed silent as the grave, down below. Jimmy Wenderby was awake when I entered his cabin, in the act of throwing off the blankets.

"Morning, Sam," he greeted, and seemed more than pleased to see me. "I've been lying here wondering what could have happened, and it has just occurred to me that the engines have stopped. What's gone wrong?"

While I told him about the propeller-shaft I watched him closely. He was one of those people who believe in a few physical exercises after leaving his bed. At first you could notice nothing out of the ordinary because he began with a few swift passes that didn't affect his weight. But when he started something with a hop, skip and a jump in it things livened up a bit. He stood poised on his toes for a moment, and then sprang upward with arms straight down at the sides.

I shall never forget the expression on Jimmy Wenderby's face when he cracked his head against the roof of his cabin. That cabin was all of ten feet between floor and ceiling. He yelled, clasped his head with both hands, stared upward at the ceiling while he thought it over.

"Try again, Jimmy," I encouraged. "Put all you've got into it this time."

Jimmy rubbed his skull and looked at me grinning. "How did that happen?" he demanded. "I feel light as a feather this morning, Sam, and—— What's the joke, anyway?"

"I came in here specially to see you perform this

(*please turn over*)

morning," I answered. "Things have been happening during the night. Get dressed and come up on deck."

While he dressed I told him of my own experiences during and after the storm. At first he laughed at me, but sobered down when he felt the bump on his head.

"The engines broken down, the radio burned out—and everybody feels fighting fit!" he commented. "Sounds crazy to me. Must have a talk with old John about it. If he's really puzzled about things there must be something going on around here."

Captain Barley was up on the bridge and staring at the sea as though he had noticed it for the first time. So engrossed was he in the movement of wind and water that we were standing beside him before he noticed us. I could see he was worried and as he looked up his expression was slow in changing. His forced smile failed to deceive Jimmy Wenderby.

"Look here, John," he said. "What's happening?"

The answer amazed both of us.

"Do you happen to have your gold watch with you, Mr. Wenderby?"

"My—my watch?" Jimmy was too surprised to argue further, but felt for his watch like an automaton. "The right time is half-past five," he said. "But I asked you——"

"Would you mind my looking at that watch, sir?"

"Certainly not. But what the hell has gone wrong, John? You might answer my question."

John Barley looked up sharply—like a man awakened from a deep reverie. "Sorry, Mr. Wenderby," he said, distractedly, and took the gold watch Jimmy held out to him. For a few moments the captain inspected it closely, compared the time it registered with his own chronometer and frowned at what he saw.

"It's an English, hand-made watch," Jimmy explained, as the captain returned it to him, "with a compensating balance, and all that sort of thing. A present from my father—and I've always found it a splendid time-keeper. Satisfied, John?"

"I'm damned if I'm satisfied!" John Barley declared, vehemently, "You said the time was five-thirty just now, Mr. Wenderby. That was the right time and yet . . ." The captain pointed toward the east. "Now what do you see there, gentlemen?" he questioned, softly. "Be serious, because this is a serious matter."

"Nothing except the sun rising," I answered. "Why?"

"Only this," said John Barley, impressively. "In our present position—according to the nautical almanack—the sun does not rise until six o'clock. In other words, for the first time in this world's history the sun is about thirty minutes too early. And that's sheer nonsense! Do you understand now? If only that damned radio was working we'd learn something. . . . And there's another thing you should know at once, Mr. Wenderby, because it's something outside our control. The *Solar Star* is drifting to the south—southward in a strong current running at something like twelve to fifteen knots! The speed seems to vary every half-hour. I can't account for it. If I made that statement to another master mariner about the South Atlantic Ocean he—he'd laugh at me! Yes, laugh at me!"

"You mean that we're drifting southward, and out of control?" Jimmy asked.

"It amounts to that," John Barley admitted reluctantly. "There's no immediate danger, of course and the engineers are working as hard as they can to get us going again. I'm sorry this has happened to spoil your holiday, Mr. Wenderby, but we just can't help ourselves."

"Of course you can't help it," Jimmy agreed, "and it hasn't spoiled anything yet, John. Take it easy. We're not complaining, are we?"

"Complaining about what?" demanded the voice of George Thormanson from behind us.

The captain just stared at him and walked away very deliberately.

But Thormanson wasn't the kind of man to be put off so easily. The few words he had overheard evidently intrigued him. He repeated his question, and when we explained he pretended to double-up with laughter—tickled to death at the idea.

"I should have thought you fellows would know better," he said, reproachfully. "Whoever heard a navigator talk such nonsense! The sun thirty minutes too early! Well, if that doesn't make the limit——"

"Hold on, George!" snapped Jimmy. "If you upset old John with your damned opinions and arguments at a time like this you'll answer to me. It doesn't matter what you know—the captain of the *Solar Star* is John Barley! What he says will go, and nothing else."

Never had I seen Jimmy in such an angry, determined mood—with the colour mounting slowly above a set jaw. It was a revelation to me, and also, I think, to George Thormanson. The latter made no reply, but walked away down to his cabin. I could visualise the glitter in his dark eyes as he went and reflected that this first sharp encounter between the two cousins was not likely to be the last, if the present situation continued. At the moment, however, Jimmy was standing for no more of Thormanson's nonsense.

A big shadow fell across the deck and I looked up to see 'Tiny' Milton resting his weight against the rail of the bridge stairway. How long he had remained a spectator of the scene I don't know, but as I glanced at him his fat face was one big smile. "So our George has spoken out of his turn once too often," he commented, and yawned. "Dear, dear! This is most distressing, sailor boys. But you won't stop George talking by telling him where he gets off. It needs a kick in the slats to do that."

The next few hours passed with all of us in a state of acute expectation. We knew the *Solar Star* was drifting somewhere in the grip of a powerful undercurrent. You could see just how strong the current was by throwing a stick overboard and watching it whirl away on the racing tide. We noticed, too, that it was becoming uncomfortably cold. Fortunately for us all, the sea was now quite calm.

Just before noon the captain came up on deck with his instruments to take a "sight" and we all watched the procedure with something more than ordinary interest. Again he consulted Jimmy's watch together with his own chronometer, made a most careful calculation and then gave fresh instructions to the man at the wheel.

Little did any of us dream to what strange world the errors in that noon sextant reading had committed us. We just had to drift on and on and, toward evening, were all shivering with the increasing cold. I remember vividly the captain's strained expression when he again consulted Jimmy's watch and compared the reading with his own.

"Just notice," he said in low tones, "that the sun is setting. It should set here just after six o'clock. The time, according to your watch and mine, Mr. Wenderby, is four-thirty!"

I was up early next morning—Tuesday morning—to find the weather still calm and growing colder. On the deck I met Captain Barley in a grim mood.

"You'll be interested to know that the sun rose at three-thirty this morning, Mr. Killick," he said, in answer to my inquiry. "You can prepare yourself for bed again at about half-past two this afternoon. If things continue this way we shall catch up with ourselves about Saturday!"

"Where's all this going to end?" I said at last. "I wonder whether there's something wrong with us, and not with—with the time . . ."

"The trouble with this world," he answered, "is that we all take too much for granted. The sun rises and sets with untailing regularity, and has done so from the beginning of time. But suppose time, as we know it, failed us—suppose——?" He broke off the conversation, and stood very still. "Can you hear anything, Mr. Killick?" he asked.

But I was already staring upward, searching the sky to locate a distant sound gradually becoming louder. It seemed to be approaching us from somewhere behind the ship and the sound was that of an aero-engine.

"An airplane—out here!" gasped John Barley.

"There it is!" I cried. "A big plane, too, John."

In a few moments the roar of the engines brought everybody up on deck, staring and raving about what an aeroplane might be doing so far south in the Atlantic.

"That machine's in trouble!" declared Thormanson, and on this occasion we all agreed with him.

The engines were spluttering, missing fire and the plane lost height, rapidly. Suddenly I realised that those in the machine intended to hit the ocean as close to us as possible—were manœuvring for position. It roared low over the *Solar Star* and finally dropped flat on a calm sea just to leeward of the ship.

As we bore slowly down upon the machine the roof of the control cabin slid back, and a figure appeared, waving to us urgently. The gap between us was closing now and then I saw that in our helpless state we might easily be swept past the plane. It was the skill of Captain John Barley that prevented it. He took the wheel, while his first officer directed operations from the foredeck. A long line snaked out from the ship, and curled like a lariat over the control cabin.

I saw the line caught and made fast round a strut—saw the rope jerk taut. . . . Slowly the machine was drawn toward us while another leather-clad figure appeared beside the one standing up in the control cabin. A voice from the plane hailed us, and was followed by a long, tense silence on our part.

For we had all heard that voice clearly—and it was the voice of a woman!

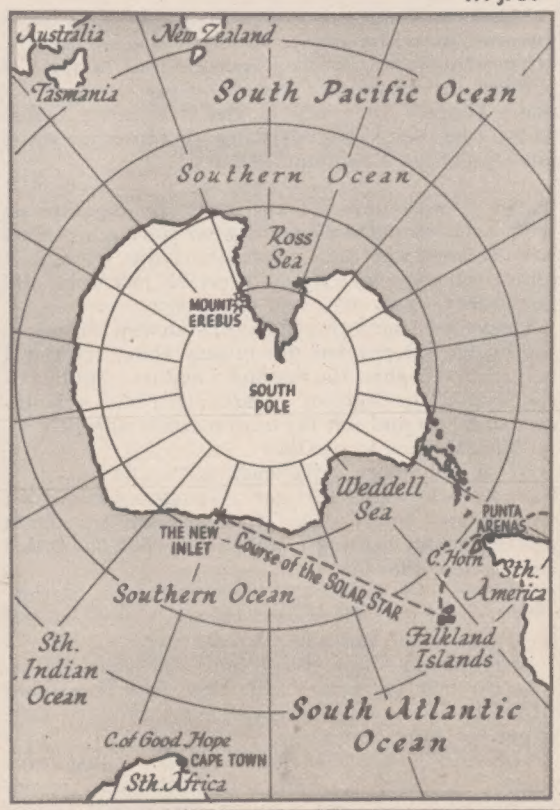
NEXT WEEK:
East of the Weddell Sea

These maps show the course taken by the disabled yacht "Solar Star" in the South Atlantic Ocean. In the grip of a fast current, running south-east, the yacht entered the Southern Ocean and approached the Antarctic Continent at a point far east of the Weddell Sea. Volcanic action, caused by the earthquake, opens an ancient inlet from the sea into Antarctica.

(Note that nearly all the exploration routes to Antarctica and the South Pole have been by way of the Weddell Sea—opposite extreme South America to the west and South Africa to the east—and also by way of the Ross Sea, opposite the coasts of Australia and New Zealand.)

That part of the Antarctic Continent opposite the Cape of Good Hope, and known to cartographers as the "Enderby Quadrant," is surrounded by vast ice-barriers which have kept fast the secrets of a vast southern continent since the beginning of Time. Antarctica is sixth among the great land masses of the world, and more than three-quarters of the inland area of 5,000,000 square miles have never been explored.

W. J. P.



ROUND THE WORLD ON £100

BY GORDON COOPER

ITINERARY

		Days	*Cost*
A	London—New York	10	£8
B	New York—Niagara—Detroit—Chicago—Denver—Grand Canyon—Los Angeles—San Francisco	30	£22
C	San Francisco—Yokohama	20	£10
D	Tokyo—Nikko—Kyoto—Kobe ...	8	£5
E	Kobe—Shanghai—Hong-Kong ...	8	£5
F	Hong-Kong—Saigon	6	£5
G	Saigon—Angkor—Bangkok—Singapore.....	14	£15
H	Singapore—Ceylon—Egypt—Marseilles.....	30	£15
I	Marseilles—London	1	£5
	TOTAL..... ..... days	127	£90

THIS must be a severely practical article, for there is no space for me to glamourise the attractions of a trip round the world, especially when my object is to show it can be accomplished on £100.

I do not suggest any "stunt" methods of travel will be required, such as working one's passage, getting work on the way, selling picture postcards, begging, or even being repatriated from some foreign port as a Distressed British Subject.

It is possible to sail round the world, call in at a few ports, see lots of blue sea but little else, and accomplish such a journey for quite a reasonable sum. But my itinerary takes you through the most interesting parts of the world on a thrift-travel basis.

It is a journey that I have made myself and my figures are based entirely on personal experience. It is only by using someone else's experience in this trip that the journey could be made on the suggested sum. Otherwise, it is more likely to cost at least double the amount.

Even as it is, there can be little margin for any mishaps, but I fancy that the person who is willing to make the experiment will also have the intelligence and ability to improvise where improvisation is needed. In many places, little bits of luck can occur to help the budget—even if it is only pennies.

Again, if two or more persons go round on this trip, they can effect economies and if they are congenial in temperament they may make the journey more enjoyable.

★ I give the journey and expenses exactly as they affected me. At the moment the section dealing with travel in Japan may be out of place, but I have not deleted it. As an alternative, I would suggest an extension of the trip to Bali, in addition to Indo-China and Angkor.

The list shows my itinerary, the number of days required for each section and the approximate cost.

In my figure of cost there remains a balance of £10, needed in various ways. There is the cost of a passport with visas. Visas are essential for the United States, Japan, China, Siam, and possibly Egypt. In the various sea voyages I have allowed only the cost of the passage ticket. There will be "extras" for tips, etc. Then it is possible that at some port there may be delays before one's boat sails.

This demands a certain reserve of money. Shore excursions during a voyage are another source of expenditure. Personal expenditure, such as drinks, smokes, postages, washing, depend largely on the individual. The extra £10 will certainly be needed.

In giving certain advice on the various sections of the tour I can lay down no hard and fast rules. Each person on a thrift tour of this kind will have his own experiences. It is not a case of going into some tourist office, putting £100 down, and then walking out with a bunch of tickets and nothing more to think about. It requires initiative and a certain enterprise, but I think that the true vagabonder will like it all the better for that.

I will deal with each section of the tour in order.

★ There are a variety of cargo boats taking a few passengers that cost £8 to £10. These ships may sail from other ports than London, such as Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, Antwerp. There are firms that will book passages at £10, but I visited the well-known public-house, Charlie Brown's, in the East End of London, where one gets the most valuable information on ships. I paid £8 and was excellently looked after.

★ There are several ways of crossing the United States. A small party could buy a cheap, second-hand car in New York and sell it in California. The depreciation would be trifling, for car prices are higher on the Pacific coast. The running costs should not exceed £10 for the whole trip, which makes it very economical when divided up.

It also gives individual freedom. Blankets and pillows should be carried, as there will be considerable savings effected at the various tourist camps where the nights can usually be spent. Meals: "Eats" are very reasonable in the States and for a thirty-day trip, two dollars a day will be ample.

Two or three persons travelling together would thus make the trans-continental journey for less than the sum allowed, but the individual traveller would find it better to hire a "lift" or take bus across the continent.

The standard bus line in the United States is the "Greyhound," issuing a ticket for the itinerary suggested, apart from the slight detour to the Grand Canyon, for about £16. It allows for breaks at any point. But there are cheaper methods.

There are buses running at cut rates and there are offices in most American cities where seats in private cars can be booked. The bell-hop at your hotel in New York will give you the best information. The cost should be covered by £10.

I would apportion the thirty days suggested in the American section as follows :—

In New York	3 *days*
New York—Niagara—Detroit—Chicago	5 *days*
In Chicago	3 *days*
Chicago—Denver	3 *days*
Denver.....	1 *day*
Denver—Grand Canyon	2 *days*
At Grand Canyon	2 *days*
Grand Canyon—Los Angeles	2 *days*
In Los Angeles	2 *days*
Los Angeles—San Francisco	2 *days*
Extra days	5 *days*
	30 *days*

If time and funds allow, I suggest that two side trips are very well worth while. One on the Denver—Grand Canyon section to the Carlsbad Caverns literally one of the world's wonders; another between Los Angeles and San Francisco to the Yosemite National Park, one of the most beautiful spots in the world. Tourists are always told more about the Yellowstone Park, but I think it can easily be missed out. In any case, its season is short—only three months.

★ I was able to book a passage on a cargo boat from San Francisco right through to Hong-Kong at 10s. a day. During the time the boat was in port in Japan and travelling between Yokohama and Kobe, I was able to explore the

(*please turn to page* 27)

THE LAST NEVER CAME

Continuing the series of stories "Postman's Knock" we find Old Joe, temporary postman, who has plundered the mail he should have delivered, sitting in his lonely room oblivious of the drama he has unconsciously produced by his dishonesty

BY DALE COLLINS

ILLUSTRATED BY M. MACKINLAY

LEONORA NASH smiled thoughtfully as she glanced about the tea lounge, with its golden walls and golden pile carpet, its fountain and palms, its expensive, indirect lighting and ventilation systems and its general suggestion of luxury for the million.

A strange setting for her love affair, but a wise one, for they had always been safe there. Andrew was not the kind of man to waste the afternoon of a working day at the talkies. He would have regarded the mere idea as fantastic. And if anyone else saw them, what more natural that she should have dropped in for an hour and met Peter? Tea would follow as a matter of course. People went to the pictures for escape, finding the screen a window opening on romance. But she and Peter found escape and romance at the pictures without the aid of the screen. They were their own stars; they wrote their own story with a love interest stronger for them than any of Hollywood's efforts.

"It seems so odd," she said, "that after to-day we shan't have to come here any more."

Peter's eyes, dark and soft, met hers in that quick understanding on which she could always rely.

"Yes," he said, "and sad in a silly way. We've been so happy here and made the wonderful discovery of each other. Yet how tawdry and commonplace it all would have been without you."

"Without you, Peter!"

"Oh, my dear!"

Within, the shadow lovers were in the midst of their drama and the lounge was deserted. He reached across and pressed her hands, looking so young and handsome and adoring that Leonora longed to kiss him. They sat for a long time in the intimacy of happy silence, unheeded by the Tyrolese waitresses who chattered in honest Cockney in the corner.

"And to-morrow, life really begins for us both," Peter said, presently. "I shall be able to work as I never have before. With you beside me, I shall compose music which will bring fame. Every note I write, every bar, will be for you. You will be the music-maker. I shall be only the instrument on which you play, able to create loveliness because of you, but silent otherwise. You're glad of that, aren't you?"

"Peter, you know I am. Prouder of that than anything. I love to hear you say it. I do want to give something to life, and it seems to me the average woman can only do that through men. If I could have had children, it would have been different. That would have satisfied my craving. But since I can't, how lovely to make you happy and help you to create. I do believe that if I didn't feel you needed me I'd not love you so much. But you do need me, don't you?"

"More than anything in the world!"

She smiled at him, blue eyes, warm mouth, fond and tender.

"Sometimes, you know, Peter, when I'm with you I feel like a mother out with her brilliant son, even though I'm only a year or so older."

"If I may say so, you look like a super-daughter out with her doting father." He grew serious. "And yet I know what you mean, darling. I sometimes feel that myself. In spite of being twenty-eight and having a bit of a name for myself and so on, I was very much a lost, small boy until you found me." His mobile face changed again, putting on the expression which conveyed how he had been. He looked absurdly young and alone and in need of comforting.

"Don't!" Leonora pleaded, "or I shall have to hug you."

"How I wish you could. Still, we've to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow. And what days they're going to be! I can't imagine how I've managed to wait for them through all these years. I wonder if a man ever needed his love so much?"

Inside the theatre a shadow sang of love.

"I hope not, dear heart. That's what makes everything worth while."

"You've no regrets, darling? You're giving up so much, making such a sacrifice for me. If it were anybody but you, I'd feel it wasn't fair. Positive there are no regrets?"

Leonora shook her head firmly.

"None. Of course, I'm sorry for Andrew and hate to have to hurt him, but I've only one life and I must have something to show for it. I've wasted so long. After all, what do I signify in Andrew's existence? I'm an efficient housekeeper and a possession he's proud of. He's generous, I admit, but the money he spends on me pays handsome dividends in self-satisfaction. If he gives me diamonds or a fur coat, I can wear them to show them off and be a good advertisement. But when you come to think of it, almost any good-looking, reasonably intelligent woman could be Mrs. Andrew Nash equally well. It's not a difficult or exacting job. In fact, most girls would jump at it. But it's not the job for me. I'm ambitious in my own feminine way. It just isn't enough to be kept in an expensive glass case on a piece of plush. I don't want to be the star item in a rich man's collection. I want to have something to show for my life."

Peter nodded gravely.

"That's just why we're justified. It isn't as if it

were a matter of two people merely wanting each other for themselves. It's bigger and deeper than that. It's what we hope to make together and will be able to make. As you say, almost any 'lovely' could be Mrs. Andrew Nash, but if Peter Beamish is ever going to amount to anything he needs only one person in the whole, wide world."

"My sweet," said Leonora and again their glances locked and held.

"Being Mrs. Peter Beamish won't be a matter of plush and glass cases," he admitted, ruefully. "It'll be a dog's life, compared with all you have now, but it will be real."

"Yes—real and an adventure!"

"He has spoilt you—everything's been smooth and easy. You're flinging a lot away. I warn you, living with me won't be calm and placid."

"I don't want calm. I'm tired of it. Calm's only another word for stagnation."

"That," smiled Peter, "I can guarantee you won't suffer from. Alive with faults, but not dull, Leonora—that's me, as you know. There'll be storms and rows and ructions. Even with your hand on the tiller, life won't go sailing along on an even keel."

"Who wants it to?" she asked. "I've had enough of even keels. Andrew doesn't know what it means to be thrown off his balance."

"It's a wonder he hasn't noticed the change in you. Your new happiness. Your changed outlook."

"I sometimes think he has. In the last few weeks he's been different and worried in some way. But I may be wrong. Just my conscience, perhaps. His

Peter nodded gravely. "That's just why we're justified. It isn't as if it were a matter of two people merely wanting each other for themselves. It's bigger and deeper than that. It's what we hope to make together"

only love's his business. His whole being centres about that, with golf next and me a poor third. Naturally, when I walk out, his vanity will be hurt, but otherwise he won't suffer. He'll buy a second Mrs. Nash even more beautiful and even more worthy of dressing up. In six months, he'll have forgotten I ever existed and his ship will go on as steadily as the *Queen Mary*."

"My ship's rather more like a Hawaiian canoe," Peter said. "Great fun, but wobbly."

"I'm not frightened of being drowned."

"I don't think you're frightened of anything. That's one of the reasons I worship you. You give me courage. I've never pretended anything to you, Leonora, and I won't even pretend that I'm brave. I'm not. Life frightens me; people do; my work does. It's only when I'm with you that I'm confident and sure. But you—you can face anything. Even to-night! I don't believe you're a scrap scared."

"I'm not," she said. "And it's not that I'm cruel, Peter, for I couldn't love you so if I were. It's simply that I know the man I'm dealing with. He'll make a scene, but he won't be hurt really. I've never been in the part of his life that matters. His business will go on just the same and just as engrossingly, when I step out. That's what matters."

Peter pulled a boyish grimace. "Still, it's brave of you. I simply can't endure scenes—unless I make them myself."

Leonora laughed. That last remark was characteristic of Peter. He could mock himself and saw himself quite clearly. Nothing pompous about him, nothing self-assured. In his most serious moments he was apt to see his own reflections and be amused by them.

"It won't really be as bad as you fear, sweet," she said. "I can handle Andrew, because I know every bit of him. I suppose it's wicked of me, but in a way I'm looking forward to a change in our routine. All our evenings for centuries have been so alike. If we're going out, the car's brought round and we're wafted off to our stalls or whatever it may be."

"Don't forget, my dear, after to-morrow, buses and the pit."

"What fun! Or if we're not going out we sit by the fire with the world's grandest radio turned on and Andrew reads the paper and grumbles that he's had a hard day and thinks he'll turn in early. Or some of his stuffy business friends come in for bridge."

"I don't think I've any friends who play cards," said Peter. "Unless it's a game of solo with the publican at our local."

Leonora laughed again.

The swing doors opened and the crowd began to pour out, discussing the merits or faults of the shadow lovers, who'd lived their brief lives gigantically for an hour and been wound back on the spools to await their next resurrection.

"I must go back to my palace in Ponsonby Road and face the music," said Leonora.

"Yes, princess, but for the last time, and to-morrow night—the garret."

"Lovely work—if you can get it," Leonora said gaily.

Andrew Nash was glad dinner was over and he could hide behind his paper. All through the meal, he had felt Leonora studying him in a puzzled way, as if she had read his secret, as if perplexed by his abstracted silences. And then his mood had communicated to her, so that she in turn had seemed to him strained and distrait. It was like that when two people had lived together for eight years—they could not have secrets.

He looked blankly at the columns of print before his eyes and did not read a word. What he saw was Leonora's face through the sheets of paper—the most beautiful face in the world, the outward and visible sign of the most beautiful person. He marvelled anew, that he—dull and prosaic Andrew Nash—had ever been able to win her love and hold it all this time. The thought made him bitter and humble also. It wasn't as if she were merely beautiful. Many women were that. He often smiled over the photographs in the fashion papers she bought. The girls in them were mere mannequins, glad enough to earn a few guineas by posing, yet they looked wonderful. That showed the value of surface beauty. Leonora's beauty was different and deeper. It went right down to the very soles of her feet; it was her very essence; it was like the sap in a tree.

How she would have laughed if he had started to pay her such unnecessary compliments.

She would have accused him of turning into a poet and screwed up her nose at him in that way she had, mocking, prettily pert.

Leonora!

And to-night he had to tell her the truth.

He was a coward, hiding behind a stupid paper full of bad news that did not matter. If only he did not feel so tired and broken and disappointed. Perhaps he could put it off? And yet that would be only more cruel. He had tried to save her from life too long. It had been a mistake. Far better if he had let her feel, all along, that the world was a ruthless place. But that had seemed such sorry knowledge to share with one so fine and delicate.

No, it must be to-night.

But he had until the last post.

The letters were always brought in. The house ran like a machine. Useless to ring for Deacon and ask him if anything had come. The man would appear at any moment. He glanced at his wristwatch. Its white face stared blandly and ironically at him, announcing that the time was a quarter past ten.

(*please turn over*)

Impossible to keep up the bluff. There would be no letters now.

Screwing the paper into a ball, he dropped it on the floor. Leonora sat opposite him, as she had through all the years. And yet he saw her with surprise, as if she were a stranger. Perhaps he had come to take her rather as a matter of course and it had needed this crisis to make him fully aware of her again. The smile she usually gave him did not come. Vaguely, he was glad of that. Could it be that, without either of them noticing it, her smile had grown mechanical, switched on like an electric light? It was not like him to be troubling about such things, but the hour sensitised him.

He braced himself. Words had to be found.

"Andrew," she said, "I've something to say to you."

His lips beneath his moustache smiled a little, not in amusement, but compassion. Poor child! Still so earnestly concerned over the petty details of the daily round. Would it be better if they did not go to the Faversham's? Was Deacon still to be trusted with the keys of the cellar and, if not, wouldn't it be well to be rid of him altogether? Those things still mattered tremendously to her, of course, because she did not know.

"Yes, Leonora," he said, "but I'm afraid it must wait."

"Sorry, Andrew, but this is too important."

"More sorry, Leonora, but what I've to say, just this once, takes precedence over anything else."

His manner, his tone, startled her.

"No, just listen to me, Leonora. For the first time in our lives I've to tell you something horrid, beastly, something that shoots things to bits."

"*You* have something to tell *me*?" she said, breathlessly, eyes wide and questioning.

"Yes. You know I love you, don't you?"

She hesitated. "Yes—s."

"You know since I've met you everything I've done has been for you?"

She echoed the same reply on the same note of fear, so that his heart ached for her.

"Well, I don't suppose it's fatal, but my bluff has been called."

She leaned forward, hands clasped. "But, Andrew, what's happened? You look—I haven't seen you look like this for years. You look—you look all helpless and—and empty."

"That's just it, Leonora," he said. "You thought you'd married a big business man, didn't you? Well, I'm sorry, but I got you by false pretences and now I must own up. Oh, I've worked hard enough and done well enough by ordinary standards, but that was for you. I wanted you to have everything, as you were entitled to. My love for you made me ambitious, eager for success. I wouldn't have cared for myself. You were involved and that was different. That was why I flung myself into the only thing I could do; the making of money. With money I could give you the life you deserved and so I had to go on and on."

"But, Andrew, you've been wonderful. So far as money goes, you've given me everything in the world a woman could want. There's never been anyone more generous. That's what makes what I've to say——"

"Let me finish, dear. Here's where I've been the sham all the time. I loathed business, I hated our entire lives; yes, even though wealth meant superficial happiness for you. That's where I've failed you. I hated golf and bridge and all those things. They were good enough for this one and that, but a man married to you should have had a better life to share with you. Even though you were so satisfied, I was sure—being older and in my own way wiser—that we weren't making as much of life as we should have. I was haunted by the thought that we'd be a long time dead. Or, even apart from that, that by the time we were ready to live it'd be too late. That was why I drove myself on, why I expanded the business and borrowed and built the whole top-heavy structure on foundations too small for it. I wanted, you see, to make enough money quickly so that we could be free of money. I wanted us to have enough to go out and find the real world.

"I've never troubled you about the business side, for that was my affair. But I'll admit, now, that what seemed the core of my existence was simply a means to an end. To succeed I had to be a successful business man and so I forced myself to appear one. It's been such a trial and a bore. Because all the time I was an artist or a poet or something like that inside. Isn't it absurd?" He hung his head, not daring to look at her. "But don't hate me, because even if I am a flop and a sham, I meant so well."

Though he still drooped, he was warmed by the knowledge that she was watching him without scorn, anxious and concerned.

"Andrew, what are you trying to tell me?"

"As I say, I've never bothered you with business and I'm not going to start now. But what it comes to is this, I'm a failure and I've bitten off more than I can chew. The concern's in a hole, owing to my being over-eager and only a ton of capital could get it out. I've no chance in the world to raise it in England, but Myerson of New York wanted an opening here. I offered the whole show to him at a bargain price, lock, stock and barrel. It wouldn't have left us rich, but it would have given us something. We've been writing and cabling. But he's changeable and unreliable. Says this one moment and that the next. I thought I'd screwed him up to a real decision. The last cable I had was that he'd agreed and the contract and so on had been mailed by the *Queen Mary*. I had it addressed to me at home, because it was too private to get into the wrong hands at the office. Well, the *Queen Mary* got in yesterday. I've been phoning home here all day while you were at the pictures, but there's been nothing. Short of a miracle, to-night was the last chance. Otherwise it would mean that Myerson has changed his mind again and not even bothered to cable. It would be just like him. The last post's in long ago. You see?"

He held out his empty hands. Leonora sat, stiff and pale, gazing at him. He fell on his knees suddenly and laid his tired head in her lap.

"That's the way it is, my darling," he said. "We're broke, ruined. We must start all over again. We'll have to get out of here with what little we can save from the wreck and begin life all over again. Oh, Leonora, Leonora, don't hate me. You're all I've got. Without you, I'm done, but with you I can do it. That's what makes it endurable. I know I'll have you by my side and so I'll be able to prove myself."

He crouched before her, ashamed and appealing, not at all the magnate, but a schoolboy who has suddenly found out in a moment of disaster that he is not quite the splendid fellow he thought he was.

"Why, of course," soothed Leonora. "Why, of course, my poor lamb." She stroked his hair.

A long time later, she said: "You know, Andy, you're just the huge, bumbling babe of a creature I fell in love with. That's what makes me so happy. Turn on the radio, chump, and let's get the dance music and celebrate. I've a phone call I must make."

"Together," said Andrew, "nothing can beat us. When you're through I'll telephone a cable to Myerson to make sure. Whatever he says, for some mysterious reason I feel happier than I have in ages."

"Me, too, Andy," she said, a glowing picture in the frame of the door, "and we thought we'd got nothing by the last post!"

Joshua Thomas, temporary postman, whose aching feet had caused him to postpone the late delivery until the morning, had not intended to open any registered mail. That was dangerous, and the other envelopes had yielded a harvest beyond his dreams. And yet his greedy fingers seemed to have escaped from his control. They opened the fat envelope with the American stamps almost without him knowing what they were about. But there was nothing of value in it, only legal documents. A queer world, in which people sent a thousand pounds in notes by ordinary rates and registered a bundle of here-in-afters and before-mentioneds.

Peter was not at his Bayswater rooms to receive the telephone message that Mrs. Nash would not be able to see him on the morrow but was writing. He was round at the local talking to his friend, Prince Boris Ivanovitch, the poet, whose slim, grey volumes were published through the interest—and capital—of Mrs. Bowden-Bowden, the wealthy widow.

"Yes, Boris, old boy," said Peter, "Leonora's not as wealthy as some, but she'll have quite a decent little income of her own, by our standards, when she's divorced. And hang it all, you can't expect too much when you're getting quite a good-looking dame into the bargain."

"True," said Prince Boris, thinking of Mrs. Bowden-Bowden.

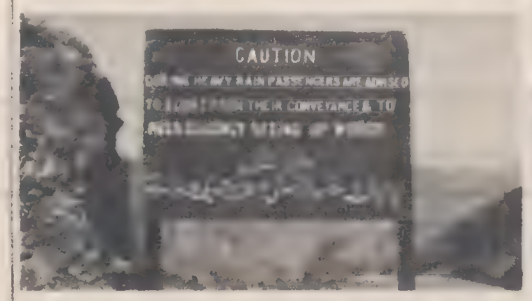
"And we'll have enough money for my simple needs. That's the main thing. A fellow's got to put his art first, hasn't he?"

NEXT WEEK:
Last Post Haste

CURIOSNAPS

"Passing Show" readers who send in original photographs of queer sights suitable for this feature, receive 10/6 for each picture published. They should enclose stamped envelope.

A corner was cut off this cottage to make way for a railway at Old Colwall, near Malvern, Worcs. We can't believe that the occupant misses his train!

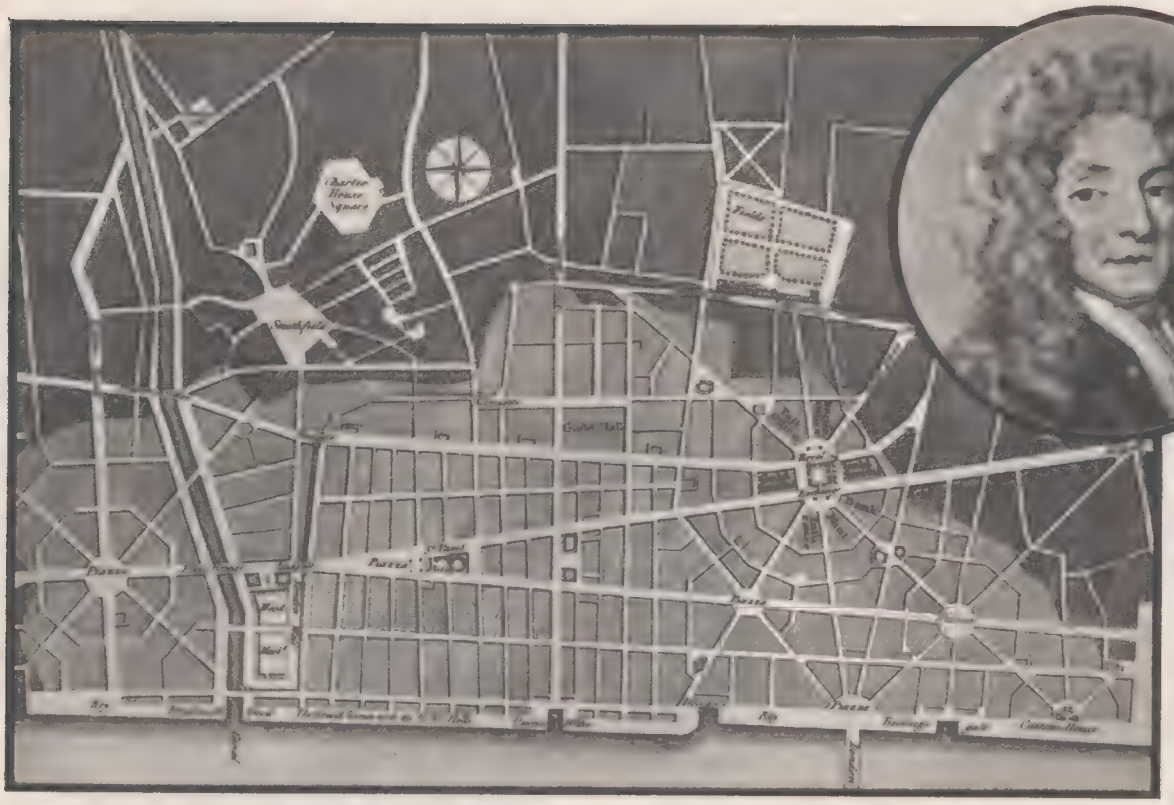


This notice stands on a road in the Himalayas. If you can read the other language, all the better, for the road is cut out of a mountain and in monsoon time, is inclined to crumble!

The Isle of Sark has only one bank—if you've got any money to put in it!

This tree stands in its own roots at Loch Lomond. We don't know how this happened, but, they're canny people, these Scots!

From Iraq comes this photograph, with the tale that it is a railway station. When smaller railway stations are discovered, we'll publish 'em!



While the experts are contemplating plans to spend millions of pounds changing London to meet modern traffic requirements, we can look at the first man who tried to meet this problem—and was ignored

WREN COULD HAVE SAVED US MILLIONS

BY C. WHITAKER WILSON

THERE had been no rain in London for weeks and clouds of dust blew down Ludgate Hill, driven by a strong, easterly breeze. John Evelyn and Dean Sancroft walked slowly from the Deanery across to the cathedral. . . .

"Well, Mr. Dean," John was saying, "I did as I told you I would. I saw King Charles and gave him your message."

"How did you put the delicate matter of Sir John Denham to His Majesty? Charles likes Denham. So do I, personally, but not as Surveyor to the King's works."

"I had to be tactful, Mr. Dean. Denham served the first Charles very faithfully and Charles II does not forget those who helped his unfortunate father. But he agreed with me that if Denham had received letters from you regarding the safety of St. Paul's and had taken no notice of them, it is high time something was done."

The dean laughed.

"Excellent, my dear John! Excellent indeed! So far so good. But I am anxious to know whether His Majesty will consider asking Denham to *retire*."

"Not the least chance of it, Mr. Dean. I saw that, at once. I suggested he appointed a Deputy-Surveyor and gave *him* the job of looking into this question of St. Paul's. He agreed and offered the post to me. Of course, I refused."

"But you have an architect's knowledge, John."

"Maybe, Mr. Dean; but Wren's the man for this piece of work. When I told the king so, he looked surprised. '*Wren?*' he said . . . 'but why Wren? I know him as an astronomer but not as an architect.'"

The dean laughed again.

"Ah! then I was not the only one to be surprised at such a suggestion," he said. "And I suppose you told the king about Wren's visit to Paris last year during the Plague and how he went there an astronomer and came back a potential architect?"

"That is just what I did tell him," said Evelyn. "What's more, I told him that Wren is a genius and easily the greatest scholar alive at this time."

Evelyn and the dean walked slowly up the steps of old St. Paul's, begun in the days of William Rufus, now crumbling with age and insecure almost everywhere.

"I wonder what Wren will suggest in the way of restoration?" mused the dean.

"We can but ask him . . . here he is, coming up the steps."

After greetings had taken place, the three men moved into the cathedral; it was then that Wren gave his final opinion. "It is better to take the whole cathedral down before it falls down," he said. "There is no rebuilding here." And he proceeded to give reasons which could never be gainsaid.

Wren and Evelyn walked down Ludgate Hill, that hot afternoon, talking earnestly. Wren wanted to build a new St. Paul's in the good old Roman style. Gothic architecture did not really interest him. As for the dean, he told them he would sleep happier that night now that something was going to be done at last for his beloved St. Paul's.

St. Paul's must be taken down before it fell down! That was August 27, 1666. *Five days later* the Great Fire settled the matter by *burning it down*!

A fortnight later still, Wren and Evelyn were picking their way among the ruins of London city. St. Paul's for the moment—indeed, for some considerable time—must stay as it was. The tower had crashed into the nave and only three walls stood upright. Wren's one thought was to prepare plans for a new London. King Charles had been as good as his word to Evelyn and had offered Wren the Deputy-Surveyorship.

Dr. John King, Bishop of London, preaching, from St. Paul's Cross, to King James I and the nobility on Sunday, March 26, 1620. His sermon recommended the speedy reparation of the Venerable Cathedral of St. Paul

Wren walked among the ruins of the old cathedral and examined them as best he could, in the circumstances. He knew that, whatever he might do, he might *not* alter the position of the cathedral in any great degree. Where St. Paul's fell, there must it rise again. Yet the worst thing was happening that *could* happen. People were petitioning that their houses and shops should also go up where they fell. Though Wren may not have known it quite so early as this, he soon found that the fact was to hinder him considerably when he designed his new Ludgate Hill.

"One thing is perfectly certain," said Wren, sadly. "I shall never be able to build St. Paul's to face down Ludgate Hill now."

London, as Wren viewed it in the autumn of 1666, was the world's saddest sight, but his inventive brain evolved plans to turn it into a modern Ephesus. Not only did he plan broad streets, but also in many instances planned to *run them in duplicate*. He would have had one-way streets, or at least would have provided such streets as could have been made one-way in these busy days, when our traffic problems increase almost daily.

He wanted a huge piazza at Ludgate Circus, with a magnificent triumphal arch with a statue of King Charles surmounting it. There would have been something far finer at Temple Bar than he actually constructed; Fleet Street would have been a broad highway worthy of an entrance to the greatest city in the world.

There would have been an embankment from Queenhithe to Westminster in far finer proportions than Bazalgette's—fine as that is.

Indeed, the gateway to the east of London and the docks would have been made that way, along Thames Street. Wren knew that Thames Street (have you ever been along it?) was once London's only High Street. In the days of the Conqueror it was the only street in London built anything like straight. The Normans had no ideas of a straight line in those days. There would have been . . . But why go on?

There was no money. At least, that is what King Charles and his ministers said. If only the king, Evelyn, Pepys and Wren had held out and the nation had been taxed, however hardly, from 1666 to 1700, London would have been magnificent.

Instead, the old narrow lanes were kept in most instances. And for the next *fifty years*—Wren, who lived to be ninety, worked day and night to rebuild ecclesiastical London. In those days every man, his wife and family attended their parish church. Eighty at least were needed. Of these Wren must have built at least fifty, some having been totally destroyed, others only partially so, but the parish authorities pestered him on all sides for their churches to be built as quickly as possible.

In private life, Wren was just a courtly English gentlemen, a profound scholar who read Latin like a Roman and whose knowledge of astronomy was second to none in England; he went to Westminster School, to Wadham College, Oxford, at 14, graduating first B.A. and then M.A.; was made Fellow of All Soul's, at 21; appointed Gresham Professor of Astronomy, at 24; succeeded the famous Seth Ward in the Savillian Chair of Astronomy at Oxford and became Deputy-Surveyor of the King's Works, at 29. He was Surveyor-General, at 34; Knight, at 42; President of the Royal Society, at 48, in addition to being granted the honorary degree of LL.D. in both Oxford and Cambridge Universities; and he was twice Member of Parliament, once for Plympton and once for Windsor.

So far as I know, he never had a drawing lesson in his life. For that matter, he was never a great draughtsman, though he ultimately became a great designer who could have saved us millions of pounds had he been allowed to put his town planning dream into practice.

UNDERSTUDY FOR LOVERS

Mr. Belvedere (Delicate Missions, Ltd.) Tipp didn't have to go backstage to learn that Cupid can be a high flier when you try to clip his wings—but he did learn some other things

BY A. R. V. NELSON-SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY J. DEWAR MILLS

"Actor!" he raged. "You! Any fool can see you've never been on the stage in your life. Miss Ester playing like a genius and you stand there like a stuffed dummy." He threw his arms round the ever-ready Evie

NICE little place you've got here, laddie," observed Mr. Toddy Bing, running an appreciative eye over the discreetly curtained and soberly furnished inner sanctum of Delicate Missions, Limited, and depositing his rather exaggerated black Homberg on the desk, with a flourish. "Bit like the room I used to have at the old Loyalty. Smaller, of course. But you don't have to find space for half a dozen temperamental stars, a couple of authors and the musical director, to say nothing of your manager and your secretaries. It's always the same, old boy; they all come down on you at once. Why, I remember——"

"Pray be seated, sir," interposed Belvedere Tipp, weighing up his client with the adroitness resulting from a close study of human nature, during long years spent as butler to half the noble families of the land, before his last master left him the legacy with which he had founded his unique firm. "You will find cigars by your elbow. Forgive my interrupting you, sir, but I am exceedingly busy."

"I know!" cried Mr. Toddy Bing, ferociously sticking his cigar in the corner of his mouth and puffing out agitated clouds of smoke, "Rush! Rush! Rush! Can't think how we keep going! Haven't had ten hours sleep since rehearsals started. Always the same when I'm putting on a new show. Frankly, old boy, I don't know how I've found time to come round here. Still, it's not so bad as it was in the old Loyalty days. Remember the run I had there? 'The Girl from Googley's,' 'The Googley Girl,' 'Girls and Googley's,' 'Googley's and Girls',—every one of them smashing hits, old boy! Lucky if I left the theatre at all, in those days. I could tell you some stories of the old Loyalty! Remember Lottie Lume? Nice little girl, but wild. One day she came to me: 'Toddy,' she said, 'What would you do if——'"

"Is it about your new show that you wish to consult me, sir?" broke in Belvedere Tipp, pointedly consulting the massive, gold hunter presented to him by the late Baron Revere.

"Ah, you've heard about it!" exclaimed Mr. Toddy Bing, eagerly. "It's going to be the biggest thing the provinces have ever seen, laddie! We open at Hadford on Monday. We're not doing number one towns. There's no money in number one towns, these days. As for London, I've given up putting shows on, there. Give the little places the big stuff—that's the ticket, old boy! There's a fortune in it. Why, my whole cast in 'Girls on Tap' isn't costing me what I paid for Lottie Lume's dresses."

"Indeed!" murmured Belvedere Tipp, with a slightly impatient caress of the few remaining hairs on his rather egg-shaped head. "I trust, sir, that your cast is a good one?"

"They'll knock Hadford cold," prophesied Mr. Toddy Bing. "They're not top-liners, mind you. But they all know their stuff. You come along on Monday, old boy, and watch the locals ogling Evie Ester. That is, if——" Mr. Bing's enthusiasm suffered a sudden black-out. "Blast the woman!" he muttered.

Belvedere Tipp looked relieved. "I gather, sir," he said, leaning forward with more professional interest, "that it is in connection with Miss Ester that you require my assistance?"

"You gather right!" assented Mr. Toddy Bing, vehemently. "She's just the type for small towns, is Evie. Not too young, plenty of curves and a broad mind. Knows how to get her stuff over, too. Why the devil she couldn't stick to it and leave young Claude Callance alone, I *don't* know! It's one of the mysteries of life, laddie, why a woman——"

"And may I inquire, sir," put in Belvedere Tipp hastily, "who is Claude Callance?"

"Plays opposite Evie," said Mr. Toddy Bing. "Earnest sort of youngster. You know the type. Been to a school of dramatic art; wants to characterise his part and all that sort of thing. Well, I don't mind him thinking that way so long as he plays as I tell him. But without me knowing anything about it he goes and fills Evie up with a lot of tripe about her art." Mr. Bing rolled his eyes ceilingwards. "Evie!" he cried. "*Art!*"

"But I thought, sir," murmured Belvedere Tipp, "that you said it was Miss Ester who was interfering with Mr. Callance?"

"That's what it's come to," said Mr. Toddy Bing, disgustedly. "Of course Evie falls for all this art stuff, good and proper, tells young Claude how nobody's ever let her play a *real* part, gloops all over him as though he were her soul mate and, before I could do anything about it, young Claude goes all dreamy and starts gabbling about how wonderful she is and there they are in each others' pockets! She's years older than he is, too, but you know how these things happen, old boy. I've seen it scores of times. I remember Lottie telling me once——"

"The way of a maid with a man, sir," interposed Belvedere Tipp, with the discreet chuckle which he reserved for indicating the utterance of a quip. "But in what way does this little romance disturb you? I should have thought that it would have—er—assisted their love scenes."

"It did," snorted Mr. Toddy Bing, "I'll say it did! While it lasted. But it's all off. And so is Evie."

"Dear me!" murmured Belvedere Tipp. "You don't mean, sir . . ."

"Walked right out on me. They had a row—don't ask me what about; probably the colour of her hair, or something equally important. Anyway, they went up in the air like a couple of rockets and now she says she won't be seen on the same stage with him. And here I am, opening on Monday without a female lead and Claude mooning around as though he wasn't there."

"Most unfortunate," commented Belvedere Tipp, thoughtfully removing his spectacles and polishing them with the silk handkerchief which he kept for that purpose. "I need hardly inquire, sir, whether you have made every effort in the—er—normal way to induce Miss Ester to return?"

"What the hell can I do?" exploded the exasperated producer. "I ask you; short of kidnapping her, what can I do? I don't even know if she's really got it badly over Claude, or if she's just taking advantage of the situation to force me into jumping up her salary. All I know is that she won't even *see* me!" He flung out his arms in dramatic appeal. "For heaven's sake, laddie, do something! *We open on*——"

But it took more than a Toddy Bing to shake Belvedere Tipp's imperturbability. "I know, sir," he purred in the tone that had calmed even the goutiest of colonels. "Pray compose yourself! I take it, sir, that if Miss Ester can be induced to return to the cast you will be able to open your show and make any little adjustments that may be necessary afterwards?"

"Never mind afterwards," cried Mr. Toddy Bing. "Get her back, old boy; that's all I want you to do."

Belvedere Tipp folded his hands over his comfortable embonpoint and gazed thoughtfully for a moment at the discreetly curtained window. "Very well," he decided, "I will accept the case. But I shall require your close co-operation, sir."

"Any darn thing!" promised Mr. Toddy Bing heartily, grasping Belvedere Tipp's hand and shaking it with fervour. "When do we start?"

"If you will resume your seat, sir," said Belvedere Tipp, with dignity, "I will outline my plan."

As he listened, Mr. Toddy Bing's spirits shot up like an express lift in the Woolworth Building. His eyes shone with the admiration of one artiste for another. Only Belvedere Tipp's compelling urbanity kept him in his seat.

"Laddie!" he cried, as the head of Delicate Missions, Limited, leaned back with the air of a Senior Wrangler who has just disposed of his child's homework, "you've got it! It's a wow! It's bigger than Syd Spill's great stunt in 'All Birds Together.' You remember—just when everything pointed to a flop, Syd came along and——"

"May I suggest, sir," broke in Belvede e Tipp, "that we have no time to lose. I should like, if I may, to start this afternoon."

"O.K., laddie! Any time you like!" Mr. Toddy Bing helped himself to another cigar and picked up his hat. "We've got the old Forum for rehearsals, this week. You'll find me knocking about somewhere."

Miss Firkin, the spinsterly, but indispensable, secretary of Belvedere Tipp, was rather longer than usual in bringing in The Ledger, an enormous brassbound volume in which the founder of Delicate Missions, Limited, entered every detail of each of his cases.

"Such a nice man, Mr. Tipp," she remarked, producing her notebook. "He gave me two tickets for a theatre next Monday. What a pity it's so far away!"

"I hardly think," observed Belvedere Tipp, "that the play is of a type that would appeal to you, Miss Firkin. Now, please take down these notes of my plan."

For once Miss Firkin was quite enthusiastic. "If I may say so, Mr. Tipp," she commented, affably, closing her notebook, "I think our plan is most suitable. That woman needs a sharp lesson. If I can be of assistance in any way . . ."

But for once Miss Firkin's assistance was not required. "There is only one thing I shall want you to do, Miss Firkin," Belvedere Tipp informed her. "You will learn what that is, this evening. Kindly wait until I return. Meanwhile, please have some lunch sent to me, quickly. Egg and cheese sandwiches, a couple of custard tarts, and—and——"

"A nice apple, Mr. Tipp?"

"A nice apple, Miss Firkin."

When Mr. Toddy Bing said that he would be knocking about somewhere in the old Forum, he spoke the bare truth. After a series of terse interviews with sundry bored individuals, who never seemed to have heard of the producer, Belvedere Tipp located him at last in a dressing-room that appeared to have been rigged out as a temporary bar.

"Good God, laddie!" exclaimed Mr. Toddy Bing, clasping his brow with dramatic intensity, "I'd forgotten all about you! Frankly, old boy, I don't know where I am. It's always the same when you're not in your own theatre. Can't get a damn thing done. Can't even——"

"May I suggest, sir," said Belvedere Tipp, coldly, "that we proceed to work immediately?"

Mr. Toddy Bing sorted out his mind with an effort. "Come downstairs," he said, "I'll take you to Cyril. He'll do you better than I could. Best make-up man in the profession."

Cyril, interrupted in the middle of a game of pontoon, listened without enthusiasm to what was required of him. "Wrong type," he pronounced, listlessly, after a brief glance at Belvedere Tipp. "Too fat."

Mr. Toddy Bing seemed to regard this as a personal insult. "What about Gus Hankenpocket?" he demanded, "and Lem K. Sump? Eighteen stoners, both of them! What you mean is, you can't do it, laddie!"

"Who can't do it?" snorted Cyril, running a professional eye over his grease-paints and motioning Belvedere Tipp to a chair. "You watch me!"

And as he watched his familiar reflection in the looking-glass changing in a way that he would have thought impossible, even Belvedere Tipp had to agree that Cyril knew his job.

"Now," cried Mr. Toddy Bing, delightedly, "we'll rig you out with a costume!"

A check suit with geometrical shoulders, pointed brown shoes and an enormous tie-pin, in place of his sober black coat, striped trousers and spats, completed the transformation.

"You'll want a hat," decided Mr. Toddy Bing, fishing out a somewhat battered straw boater. "Bit dated. Still, it's in character. Better keep it in your hand." He surveyed his handiwork with beaming approval. "You wouldn't know *yourself*, laddie!" he cried. "Watch your accent, that's all!"

But there was an acid test that Belvedere Tipp always applied on the occasions when he assumed a disguise. If he could conceal his identity from Miss Firkin, he would pass muster anywhere.

Had they been present, Mr. Toddy Bing and Cyril would have found even further cause for satisfaction in the blank and rather hostile stare with which Miss Firkin greeted her Americanised chief.

"Mr. Tipp," she informed him, coldly, "will not be back to-night. It is after office hours."

"Excellent," murmured Belvedere Tipp, in his natural voice, watching her dawning and indignant recognition, with approval. "Then that will be all for to-night, Miss Firkin."

By the time Miss Firkin had recovered from her astonishment and had tidied the office with her usual methodical thoroughness, before going home, Belvedere Tipp was well on the way to Miss Evie Ester's flat.

Whatever rebuffs Miss Ester may have administered to Mr. Toddy Bing they did not, apparently, apply to other visitors.

"Mr. Belvedere K. Tipp?" she cooed, advancing magnetically into the room, after a suitable period of waiting. "You wish to see me?"

"Miss Ester!" cried Belvedere Tipp, nasally, "I'll say I'm glad to meet you!"

"Glad to meet *you*," countered Miss Ester. "It *was* you, wasn't it, who sent me all those gorgeous flowers when I was 'Katie' in 'Heartaches'?"

Belvedere Tipp stuck his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat and regarded her with the heavy concentration of a man whose time is worth a hundred dollars a minute. "Miss Ester," he said, "I guess you know who I am! Belvedere K. Tipp, of Undertone Pictures, Inc."

The most powerful spotlight would have seemed pale beside Miss Ester's smile. "Mr. Tipp!" she cried. "Of course! *Do* sit down! I'll ring for tea!"

Belvedere Tipp produced a cigar, bit off the end with difficulty and stuck it aggressively in the corner of his mouth. "Miss Ester," he announced, "my talent scouts have been watching you. They're good boys and what they say goes with me. But I wanted to give you the once-over myself."

"Yes?" breathed Miss Ester.

"Waal, I guess you'll do!"

Miss Ester caught hold of the back of a chair. "Is that an offer?" she asked eagerly.

"You're as good as in my new picture," Belvedere Tipp assured her.

But Miss Ester had no intention of being swept off her feet. "Before we discuss salaries," she said sweetly, "I think I ought to mention that I'm under contract to Toddy Bing."

Belvedere Tipp shifted his cigar an inch or so.

(*please turn over*)

"See here," he said, "you can't pull that stuff across me. I've seen Toddy and got the low-down on that business. I guess I'm gonna see him right, too, before I tie you up. And get this, Miss Ester: You needn't think it's any use trying to go all temperamental on me!"

"Toddy let me down!" cried Miss Ester, vehemently. "I'd never walk out on anyone who played square with me. And I'm sure you'd play square, Mr. Tipp?"

"Aw, come off it," said Belvedere Tipp, "Toddy's a swell guy. But I'm not concerned with all that. I want you in my new picture."

"Then," suggested Miss Ester, brightly, "shall we discuss salaries?"

"Okay," agreed Belvedere Tipp, as though he were being forced to waste time on trivial details. "A hundred a week."

"Pounds, Mr. Tipp?"

"Dollars."

A tiny frown wrinkled Miss Ester's well-preserved brow. "You said a day, Mr. Tipp?"

"A week," repeated Belvedere Tipp. "Why, some of my stars don't get a hundred a day."

"Some of your stars!" echoed Miss Ester, suspiciously. "Here, what sort of a part are you offering me?"

Belvedere Tipp grew enthusiastic. "It's the one part I couldn't cast until my boys spotted you," he cried. "I guess they went all over the world to find somebody. You see, I gotta have someone absolutely typed and you're sure it! Why, you won't have to act at all. All you've gotta do is be natural——"

"Yes," broke in Miss Ester, impatiently, "but what part is it?"

"Oh, we ain't got a *name* for it yet," said Belvedere Tipp, with the air of dismissing a fool question. "It's a middle-aged spinster who's frightened of growing old gracefully."

For a moment, Miss Ester seemed incapable of grasping what she had heard. Then, leaping to her feet, she faced Belvedere Tipp with eyes blazing.

"Get out!" she cried. "How dare you force your way in here and insult me!"

"Aw, take it easy," urged Belvedere Tipp. "Face facts. You can't act. You never could. I'm giving you the chance to be yourself and get a hundred a week for it. If you're sensible, it'll be years before you fade out. Over here you're finished already."

Miss Ester marred her classic pose somewhat by choking. "Brute!" she spluttered. "Get out!"

Belvedere Tipp picked up his hat with the resigned sigh of a parent faced by an obstinate child. "You won't get another chance like this," he called from the door. "Think it over, honey!"

And Belvedere Tipp almost purred with satisfaction as, in the quietness of his office, he struggled to remove the make-up so skilfully applied by Cyril.

That the result of Miss Ester's "thinking it over" was exactly what he expected it would be, was proved by a jubilant telephone call from Mr. Toddy Bing the next morning.

"Grand work, old boy!" enthused the producer. "She's back already. Sweet as anything. Not a word about more salary. Can't do enough for me. Wants me to sign her up on a long-term contract. You must have shaken her up, laddie! Why, she's more docile than Lottie Lume was after Syd had——"

"I am delighted, sir," broke in Belvedere Tipp, "to hear that matters have been brought to so satisfactory a conclusion. I beg your pardon, sir? No, thank you, sir; I would prefer a cheque. Shares in theatrical enterprises are not quite in my line. No, sir, I am afraid I must insist. Very good, sir. Good day to *you*, sir!"

Miss Firkin was about to write "Completed" in The Ledger against the case of Mr. Toddy Bing, when her Chief turned away from the telephone and held up his hand.

"I think, Miss Firkin," he said, "that we will leave the case open for the moment. I have an idea that we shall hear from Mr. Bing again before long. There are certain factors that I fear he has overlooked."

The accuracy of his prophecy was not long in doubt. Within a few hours, Mr. Toddy Bing was again seated suppliantly in the inner sanctum.

"Dear me," murmured Belvedere Tipp, "this is very distressing. I gather, sir, that you are having trouble with young Mr. Callance."

Mr. Toddy Bing gazed at him as though he had produced a rabbit instead of a decanter and syphon from the little cupboard under the desk. "How the devil do you know that?" he cried.

"My dear sir," purred Belvedere Tipp, "from your description of Mr. Callance it was evident to me that he would not view Miss Ester's return to the case, with the same equanimity as you and Miss Ester, herself, might view it."

Mr. Toddy Bing absent-mindedly mopped his brow with his scarf. "You've said it!" he assented gloomily, "Claude's gone clean crazy. Says he can't act his part now that it's all over between him and Evie. Says he can't 'feel' it—it's all different—the memory's too strong—and all that sort of drivel. Who the hell wants him to 'feel' it? All he's got to do is coo at the moon with Evie."

"And Miss Ester, sir. Won't she assist?"

"Oh, she's doing her stuff all right. But Claude says she doesn't mean it any more. His work's poisonous, old boy. Might as well stick a block of wood on the stage. Still, there was no one else and I'd have got him through somehow if he hadn't quit."

"You mean, sir, that he's left the cast?"

"Not exactly. Says he'll play any other part, but he can't play opposite Evie any more."

Belvedere Tipp gravely inclined his head. "He takes his art seriously."

"Art!" snorted Mr. Toddy Bing. "You lay off that word, laddie! I've heard just about enough of it. The point is: What the hell am I going to do? Don't you realise, old boy, that we——"

"You open on Monday, sir," finished Belvedere Tipp; "but have no fear. I foresaw this situation and I have already evolved a supplementary plan. Now, sir, please listen closely, for we have no time to lose."

There was an air of stagnation about the Forum when they arrived. Mr. Toddy Bing's assistant was half-heartedly rehearsing one of the few scenes in which Evie and Claude did not appear. Evie herself was reclining gracefully in the front row of the stalls with a diaphanous wrap just failing to conceal her liberal figure. Claude was gazing at her dismally from the other side of the house.

DREAM ROLLER!

What is the difference between a steam-roller and a dream roller?

Ask LONGSHANKS—he knows. And so will you when you read that very funny story

"CARRIED AWAY BY A DREAM"

by FRANCIS FOSTER

NEXT WEEK

"Everyone on the stage!" bawled Mr. Toddy Bing, hurrying forward, with Belvedere Tipp following stately in his wake.

In the scurry and scramble, Belvedere Tipp came face to face with Evie, but any qualms he might have felt were instantly removed for Miss Ester gave no sign of recognition, even when the house lights came on suddenly, with the head of Delicate Missions, Limited, standing at her elbow.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" shouted Mr. Toddy Bing to the cast gathered before him in a multi-coloured semi-circle. "There is no need for me to dwell upon the painful situation that has arisen. One of us—I will mention no names—has seen fit to discover at the eleventh hour that he is incapable of playing his part. But in the hour of our dire need, ladies and gentlemen, there has appeared a noble soul willing to step into the breach. I am pledged not to reveal his real name. Suffice it to say that in the days before his retirement there were few managements able to raise a large enough sum to secure the privilege of his services. And he, ladies and gentlemen—this great actor of a bygone day—has offered to play opposite Miss Ester. I present to you, my old friend, Belver Butler!"

Belvedere Tipp bowed low and cast a gracious smile here and there in response to the applause.

"Act one. Moon scene!" ordered Mr. Toddy Bing.

While the stage was being cleared, Claude came up and eyed his successor incredulously. "You," he said, "playing opposite Evie!"

"And why not?" inquired Belvedere Tipp.

"Hop it!" said Mr. Toddy Bing, tersely, "you're cluttering up the stage."

"Look here," demanded Claude, anxiously, "how do *I* stand? If he's taking my part, what am I going to do?"

"Better find a nice studious repertory company," advised the producer. "Our of my way! Evie!"

"Yes, Mr. Bing?"

"Start after the chorus exit. And help Mr. Butler all you can."

Miss Ester moved glamorously towards Belvedere Tipp. "Darling," she cried, "through long days and longer nights have I waited for this moment—this precious, glittering moment when at last we are alone and I can feel again the thrill of your dear arms around me."

Belvedere Tipp studied his script carefully and took a measured step forward. "My love!" he declaimed.

A faint titter came from the darkened auditorium.

"Why are you so silent," went on Belvedere Tipp, sonorously, with another cautious look at his script, "little one?"

Miss Ester cast a soulful glance gallery-wards. "Nearer," she hissed.

Whatever Belvedere Tipp's feelings may have been as the scene worked laboriously to its climax, they were nothing to those of Claude. Only the firmly restraining hand of Mr. Toddy Bing's assistant, prevented him from rushing on the stage and thrusting his successor aside.

The rest of the cast curled up in their seats and stuffed handkerchiefs in their mouths.

Belvedere Tipp grasped Miss Ester firmly round the waist with one arm and held out his script with the other. "At last!" he said, peering at her over his spectacles.

Miss Ester gazed up at him with parted lips.

"Go on!" shouted Mr. Toddy Bing.

"Buck up!" whispered Miss Ester.

Belvedere Tipp carefully folded up his script and put it in his pocket. Then, in the manner of a man learning a new exercise, he drew Evie towards him with portly dignity.

Then everything happened at once. A howl of no longer repressible laughter filled the auditorium. Miss Ester dissolved in semi-hysteria. And, as Mr. Toddy Bing leapt on to the stage, Claude broke away from his restrainer and hurled himself between Belvedere Tipp and Evie.

"Actor!" he raged. "You! Any fool can see you've never been on the stage in your life! Miss Ester playing like a genius and you stand there like a stuffed dummy!" He threw his arms around the ever-ready Evie. "Look!" he cried. "This is the way to do it, you fool! Watch!"

Mr. Toddy Bing flung out his arms rapturously. "My God, laddie!" he yelled, "you've got it at last. Why couldn't you do that before? Again!"

Claude obliged. And went on obliging.

"Right!" ordered Mr. Toddy Bing. "Back to the beginning. Keep that up, old boy, and you'll be a riot." He turned to Belvedere Tipp, but the head of Delicate Missions, Limited, was already half-way to the exit. There were occasions, however, when Belvedere Tipp considered it advisable to have the financial aspect of a case disposed of without delay. And so, when the producer returned to his office after the rehearsal, he found his saviour awaiting him.

"Laddie!" he cried. "You were immense! I've got a great idea! Burlesque of the Moon scene with you opposite Evie! It'll be tremendous. Bigger than Lottie Lume's scene with——"

"I had no intention of being humorous," observed Belvedere Tipp, frigidly. "You will forgive my mentioning it, sir, but now that the case is concluded, perhaps you would care to—er——"

Mr. Toddy Bing reluctantly produced his cheque book.

Of how the great show went at Hadford, Belvedere Tipp had no news until, to his surprise, he ran into the irrepressible Mr. Toddy Bing, only a few weeks later.

"My dear sir," he exclaimed, "I thought you were touring the country with your production."

"Oh, you mean 'Girls on Tap?'" said Mr. Toddy Bing, as though he were extracting an unimportant detail from a mass of vital matter in his mind. "Nice little show, that was. But you can never tell with the provinces. Everything against us, old boy. Horse show at Hadford and all the rest of it. Wasn't worth keeping it on. But I've got something really big now, laddie. It'll knock 'em stiff. Lottie Lume, boy! Biggest come-back of the century. I've got the theatre and everything. All I'm stuck for is finance. Now, if you like to come in for a thousand, laddie. . . ."

THE CRIMINOLOGIST

BY GILBERT HORSLER

ILLUSTRATED BY EDGAR SPENCELEY

MRS. HUFFCASTLE awakened with a piercing scream, loud enough to almost drown the hum of the ship's turbines. She followed this with an immediate investigation which sent her promptly into hysterics; in which condition she was found by a curious steward. However, she managed to babble out sufficient sense to the attendant to make him call the purser, who, in his turn, requested the presence of the captain, who, in his turn, gave peremptory orders for the attendance of the ship's permanent detective.

The lady was, of course, well known to all of them. The wife of an American wheat king finds it as difficult to travel incognito as royalty itself. Not that Mrs. Huffcastle ever tried to hide her identity; she was much too proud of her husband's millions.

"It's the ruby," she moaned. "It's gone."

Now the ruby required no more explanation than the good lady herself. It had been headlined into a nine days' wonder and the purchase of it, by the wheat king's wife, had staved off the bankruptcy of one of England's most noble families for another generation.

"Perhaps you will tell us exactly what happened?" requested the purser.

"I was asleep," she commenced, unnecessarily. "At least, I think I must have been partly asleep and partly awake, for I have a distinct remembrance of some alien presence and a ghostly form near the door, then I actually saw the door close and so, of course, I screamed."

"Of course," murmured the purser, while the detective, a crude individual named Rogers, questioned . . . "And then what, madam?"

"Naturally, my first thoughts were for my jewel, I had left it locked in the drawer of my dressing table, after wearing it at the concert last night."

"A foolish thing to do," reproved Rogers. "You should have handed it to the purser."

"I suppose I should, but I was tired and I never dreamed that there were thieves aboard this boat."

"There are thieves aboard all boats," grunted the detective; "that's why I'm here. And then," he continued, "I expect you found the lock busted and the stone gone?"

"Oh dear, yes," said the good lady, tearfully.

"Was anything else missing?" asked Rogers.

"As far as I could see, no. Only the pendant with the ruby and its setting."

The detective was about to cross to the dressing-table to investigate for himself, when he stopped abruptly at a knock at the door, which was followed immediately by the entrance of a short, mild, little man, who gazed enquiringly at a rude world through heavy lensed glasses.

"What are you doing here, Mr. Walton?" asked the captain, sternly.

"I have just heard about the robbery; those things soon get round, you know, and I wondered if I could be of any assistance," replied Tubby Walton, apologetically.

"You? What on earth do you think you can do, sir?" snapped the captain.

"Surely you know what I am?" The speaker gave a surprised smile.

"I know that you write books, of course . . . detective stories, aren't they? Indeed, I have read some of them, but this is fact . . . not fiction."

"Not so much difference as you might think," answered the composer of thrillers. "And as well as being an author I have the honour to be known as a criminologist."

"Criminologist . . ." began Rogers, in tones which showed plainly his opinion of that profession, when the bereaved lady herself took a hand in the conversation.

"Oh, please, let Mr. Walton help us, Captain," she pleaded. "I, too, have read his books and, really, they are awfully clever." She turned to the blushing author, who bowed a graceful acknowledgment.

"Umph!" grunted the captain. "As you have already intruded, I suppose you may as well stay. It's possible that you may spot something that our man misses, although I very much doubt it."

Not at all downcast by this half-hearted permission, Tubby Walton courteously requested Mrs. Huffcastle to repeat her story.

Whoever had committed the robbery had evidently worked both fast and surely. The rather flimsy lock of the drawer had been forced. By the look of the cuts in the wood-work, a jack knife had been used. Beyond that and the empty case which had contained the jewel, there at first appeared nothing in the shape of a clue. None of the other jewellery had been touched.

To the disgust of Rogers, it was the amateur who, after all, made the first discovery of any account. To assist his examination he had produced a powerful magnifying glass from his pocket, the power of which he accentuated by means of an electric torch. With this he went carefully over every inch of the woodwork round the broken lock.

"Ah!" he said, after a moment or two of close peering. "Look at this. Our man's left his autograph."

There was no mistake about it. Plainly to be discerned through the glass were the widely spaced imprints of the robber's thumb and one finger. It was easy to see how they had been caused. While working with one hand, the burglar had leaned the other heavily on the table and the veneer of the wood had captured a perfect double print.

"It's certainly a find, but I'm afraid it's not going to help us a lot. There would be blue murder if we tried to take the prints of every passenger on the ship, which seems to be the only way of tracing them," said the purser, doubtfully.

"On the contrary, these prints, in addition to the story which this lady has so lucidly told, have given me all the facts I want to trace the thief and restore the jewel," said Tubby Walton, cheerfully.

The three men, after a first amazed stare, showed nothing but disbelief: "This is no joking matter, sir," said the captain, curtly.

"I see you don't believe me," smiled Tubby. "Yet I assure you I am correct. Not only that, if you are on deck punctually at eleven o'clock . . . I don't know what that is in bells, although I suppose I should . . . I will not only restore the ruby, but also hand the robber into your custody. And now, if you will excuse me, I am off to request the help of a young friend of mine." With which Tubby Walton trotted amiably away.

The deck was, as usual, crowded at the hour mentioned and, if only out of curiosity, all three men kept the appointment. In any case, their combined brain-wracking had left them as far from solving the mystery as at the beginning.

By his actions, Walton himself appeared to have completely forgotten his promise. Instead, he was chatting affably with a pair of youngsters, with whom he had already made friends on the voyage.

After a little laughing chaff, the youngsters, hardly out of their 'teens, began to idly throw a tennis ball from one to the other. They also insisted on including their older friend in their game, pulling his leg mercilessly as he muffed catch after catch. Gradually, in their play, they worked the criminologist to the rail of the ship, close to where a tall, turbanned Indian stood taking the air.

At this moment, one of the youngsters threw the ball, high and hard in the direction of Walton. The writing man made a wild, hopeless grab; not only missing the catch, but in his desperate endeavour, knocking the Indian's turban flying from his head.

With a startled cry, the Oriental leaped forward to retrieve his property, but Tubby was too quick for him. Like a flash he dived for the turban and, feeling rapidly round the inside, a second later held aloft a diamond set ruby, which gleamed darkly in the sunlight.

The Indian, Mira Dihnn by name, gave no trouble, once his crime was discovered. Even the fingerprints were only necessary as a check, as he made a full confession.

It was some hours later, having escaped the fulsome praises of the entire ship's company, that Tubby Walton was enjoying a congratulatory smoke and drink in the captain's private cabin.

"Well, Mr. Walton," said that gentleman, "I must admit that you deserve all the praise you have received. My own is especially heartfelt. As you know, we hate this sort of thing aboard ship and the sooner anything of the kind is discovered the better we are pleased. Now one more favour. . . . How in the name of Heaven did you manage to discover the thief from such slender clues?"

"A good conjuror should never show his tricks," smiled Tubby. "However, as a favour to yourself I'll let you into the secret. Finding the stone in the turban was admittedly guess work, but it was pretty safe guessing, these fellows use their turbans as hiding places . . . have done so from time immemorial. The rest was easy.

"In the first place, the crime was committed fairly late in the morning. That pointed to a passenger and not one of the crew. The ship is well patrolled at night, as an intending thief would know, but just before rising time, vigilance is relaxed and an early rising passenger attracts no particular attention. I know that to be true because I am, myself, an early riser.

"Next, there were the words of Mrs. Huffcastle. She said that she *sensed* an alien presence . . . a ghostly presence. Now you all took that for a figure of speech; actually she meant what she said . . . There is a difference to a half wakeful person in the nearness of someone of a different race, also the eye sometimes sees before the brain is sufficiently alert to accept the message. There you have a ghostly, white turban.

"Finally, and most important, there were the fingerprints. These showed a hand more narrow than that of an ordinary white man, while the width of the spread was greater than that of any woman. Then the silence and the speed of the whole affair. It all shouted the work of an Oriental . . . and there was, as I very well knew, only one Oriental aboard the boat and I had noticed that he was invariably on deck about elevenish." The speaker paused to sip his whisky, while a wicked gleam suddenly shot from behind the thick lenses.

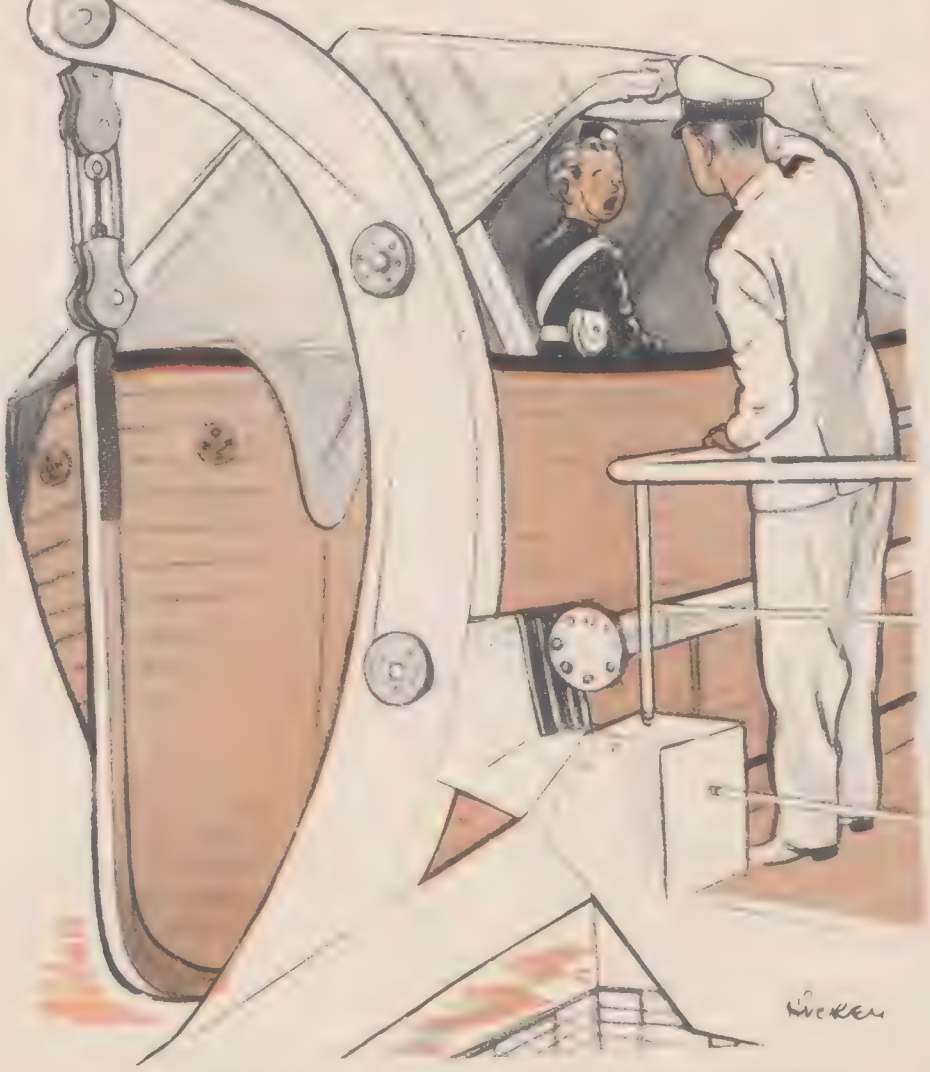
"Besides," said Tubby Walton, "I saw the beggar leaving Mrs. Huffcastle's cabin."

Laugh

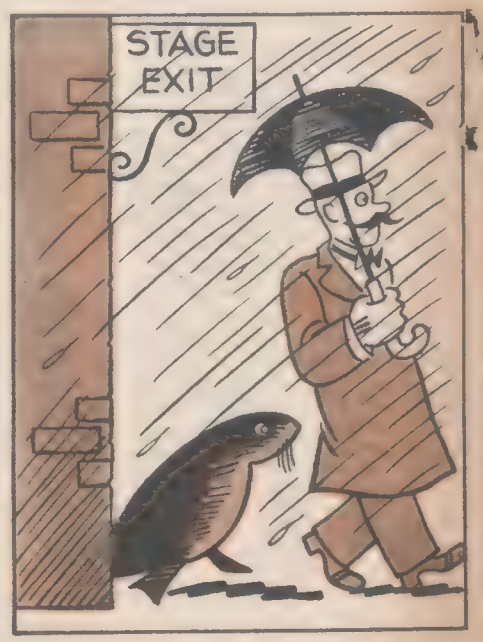
The "PASSING SHOW

"They've been at it so long, they've converted each other!"

"You should have stated in your letter you were a bus driver!"



"Stowaway be blowed! I was engaged to keep this seat for a lady on B deck!"



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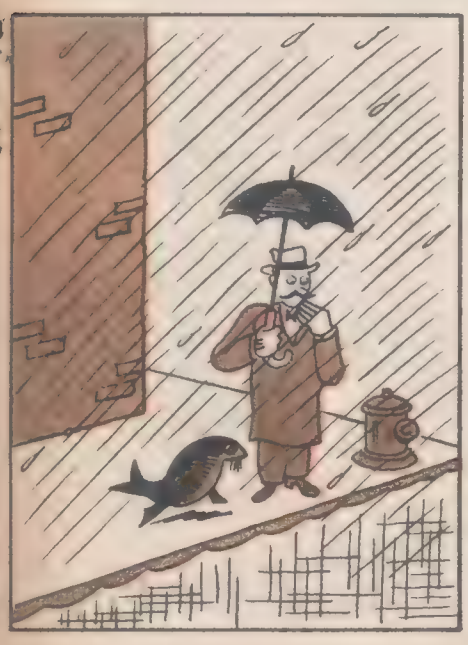
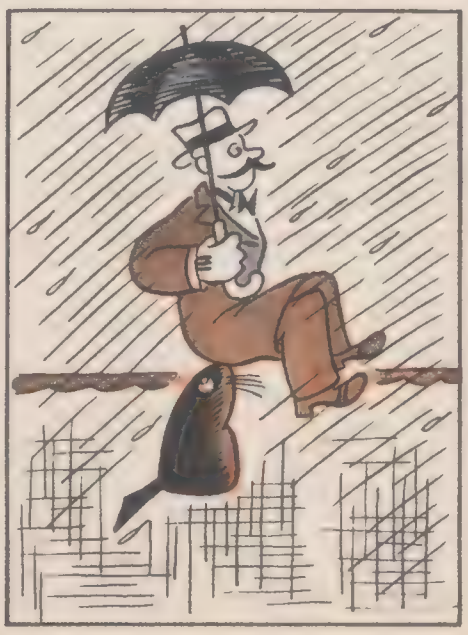
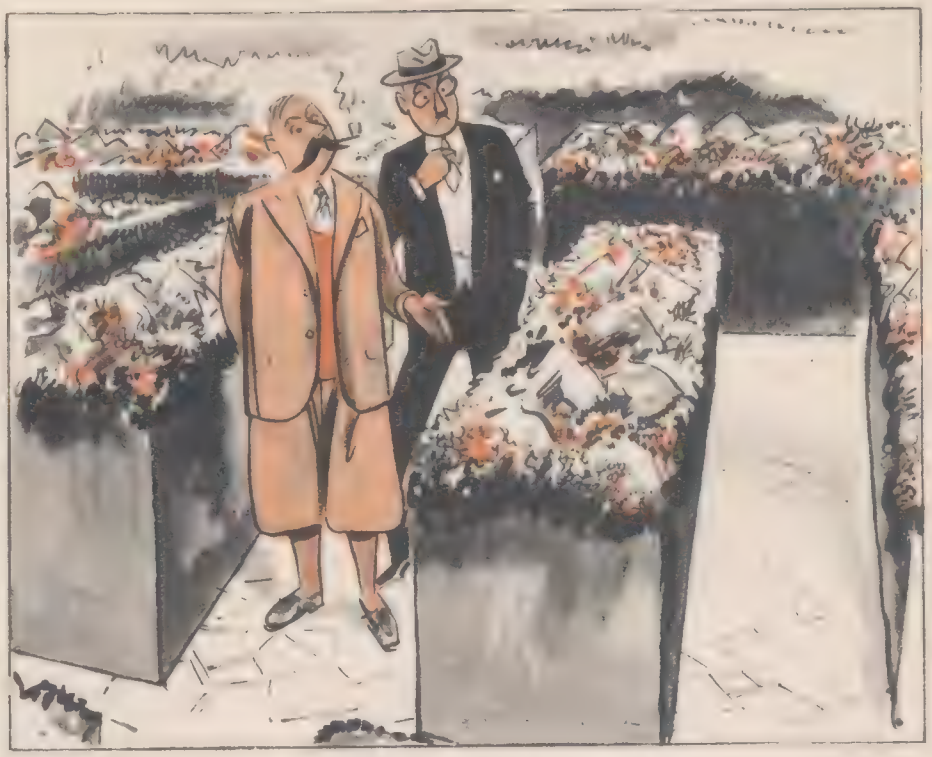
ow" Smile Section

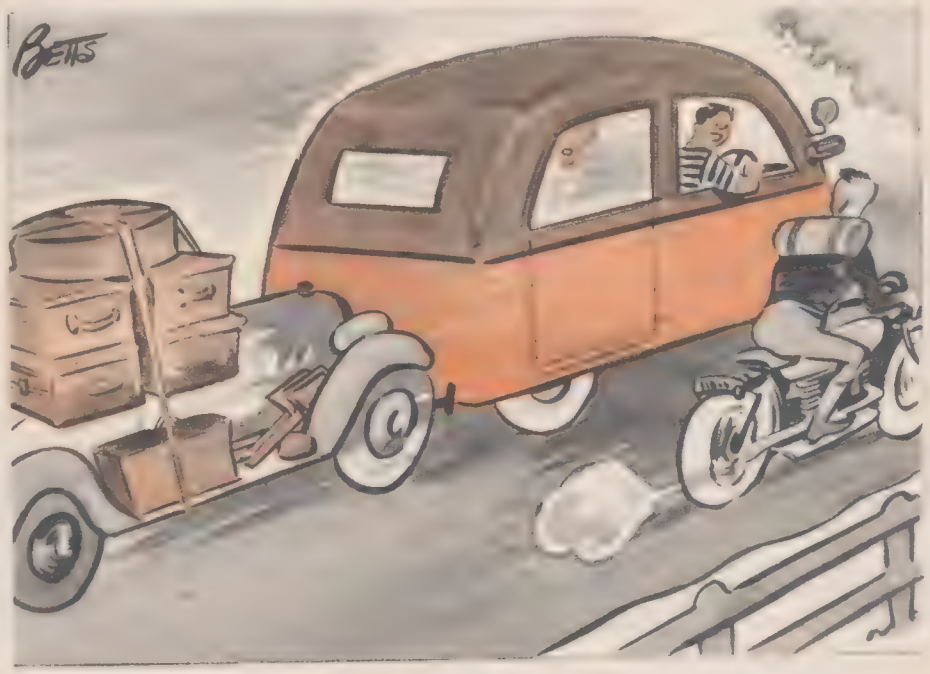
"He says can he have a piece of soap ?"







"I had my rock garden built like this because I hate stooping."



"It's so cosy in here we had the car engine fitted in the trailer!"

Security.

A MAN OUT

By A. C. BARRETT

"Mistress said you made a mistake and gave me strychnine instead of aspirin."
"Then she must pay me one and seven extra."
—Gazzettino Illustrato, Venice.

The lorry driver was unfortunate enough to run his car into a house where a woman stood ironing. Having lost his nerve he did not know what to say and blurted out :

"Can you tell me the way to Wigan?"

Woman : "Yes, straight past the sideboard and then to the left past the piano!"—*Lustige Blätter, Berlin.*

"When your wife is away, do you have to tell her everything that you do?"

"No, she will not hear a thing from me."

"A model wife. You are a lucky man."

"She says that she gets a more reliable account from the neighbours."—*Karikaturen, Oslo.*

Customer : "What is croquette à la Cambacères?"

Waiter : "It is really Valencienne à la Crème, something like Tournedoes pochées à la Boulagnaise with sauce rapout fin."

Customer : "Um—bring me a steak."—*Vart Hem, Stockholm.*

"DON'T you think the men have more nerve than ever this summer?" asked Margaret, stretching herself luxuriously in her deck-chair. "They seem to assume that an affair is part of their holiday, thrown in with sea breezes, constant hot water, good beds, and ample table!"

She and her friend Marcelle were lounging on the balcony of the room they shared, clothed simply in the modern version of the fig-leaf—perched on the nose—and swimming suits.

The topic was interesting enough to induce Marcelle to open her eyes behind the green sun-glasses.

"But that's not the worst of it," she contributed. "What annoys me most is that these holiday-making lads and grass-widowers are all exactly alike, as if they were turned out of a factory. When you first meet them, they all seem witty, chivalrous, full of bright ideas and well-to-do. They all have the same line of flattering talk and impress us with the same type of epigrammatic wit and by the time one has debunked them as mere bluffers and false alarms, their leave is over and one finds one has wasted one's holiday on an insignificant nit-wit; ten to one he turns out to be married and one discovers all his flashes of brilliancy were pinched from Oscar Wilde."

After a little interval of reflection she added, "Often some tiny trifle will show who is the right man. Once I was lucky enough to lose a suède glove on the second day of my holiday."

"*Lucky* enough?"

"Just listen. The commissionaire at my hotel advised me to put up a notice of the loss : 'Lost yesterday, between the Promenade and the Park Café, a white suède glove; the finder is requested to hand it to the commissionaire at the Hotel Astoria.' The notice was put up on a tree on the Promenade. The same day a young man turned up. He had read the advertisement, gone over the whole ground thoroughly and found the glove."

CAMEO STORY

By Peter Fabrizius

SUÈDE GLOVE TEST

"Very touching of him to take so much trouble!"

"I don't think much of you as a judge of character. What I deduced was that he was petty and pedantic—probably a minor official with a paltry salary. Not my style, anyway. Well, hardly an hour afterwards Boy Friend No. 2 presented himself, complete with glove."

"But surely the Petty Pedant had found it?"

"Oh yes. But No. 2 had also read the notice and had inferred from all sorts of little details that the lost glove must belong to me. He had been struck by me the day before and was delighted at the chance of getting to know me. So he bought a pair of gloves and brought one of them to me."

"Well done! A man of resource!"

"An improvement on the first, at least. He wasn't stupid, because it couldn't have been at all easy to find out that it was really I who had lost the glove. The idea of buying a pair showed a certain originality, which I like men to have. And then it was fairly safe to assume he was quite nicely off, as suède gloves aren't too cheap."

"Where was the snag, then?" asked Margaret.

"The snag was that the young man confessed right away that he had bought the glove. That amounted to pointing out what a generous fellow he was and I didn't like it. Moreover—now for some serious psychology—he showed he was wanting in the higher spirit of chivalry and a proper understanding of the workings of a woman's mind. By owning that he had intended to scrape acquaintance with me, he forced me to be more distant than I should have been otherwise, as, of course, I couldn't let him see at once that I was flattered by his stratagem or impressed by his free-handedness—which hadn't cost him exactly a fortune, after all. So I assumed rather a cold, ironic manner, and that made him so furious that he took his departure in what I suppose is meant by 'dudgeon.' Just a little later, the third showed up.

"He said he had found it. But I wasn't born yesterday. No. 2 had brought me a right-hand glove and this one produced a left-hand one—same shade, shape, size and style. Not a doubt whatever, when his experiment had failed No. 2 had sold the odd glove and his idea—perhaps at a profit. In any case, the dapper young man who wanted to impress me with a purchased plan got thrown out on his ear and I warned him and his enterprising business friend to keep out of my sight. But at least I had made a new pair of gloves out of the deal.

"No. 3 had hardly left when No. 4 appeared. He tried to persuade me he had found the glove and was delighted to be able to do a slight service to its charming owner. Then he handed me the glove, but it was at least a size too small."

"Amazing!" cried Margaret. "What a lot of ways there are of getting in wrong with you!"

"I took on the last 'finder,'" said Margaret pensively. "We had a lovely flirtation which lasted the whole holidays and I never had a single regret."

"But I thought you said the glove he brought was far too small?"

Marcelle smiled. "That's just it—he had that little something the others hadn't got—the higher spirit of chivalry and a proper understanding of the workings of a woman's mind."

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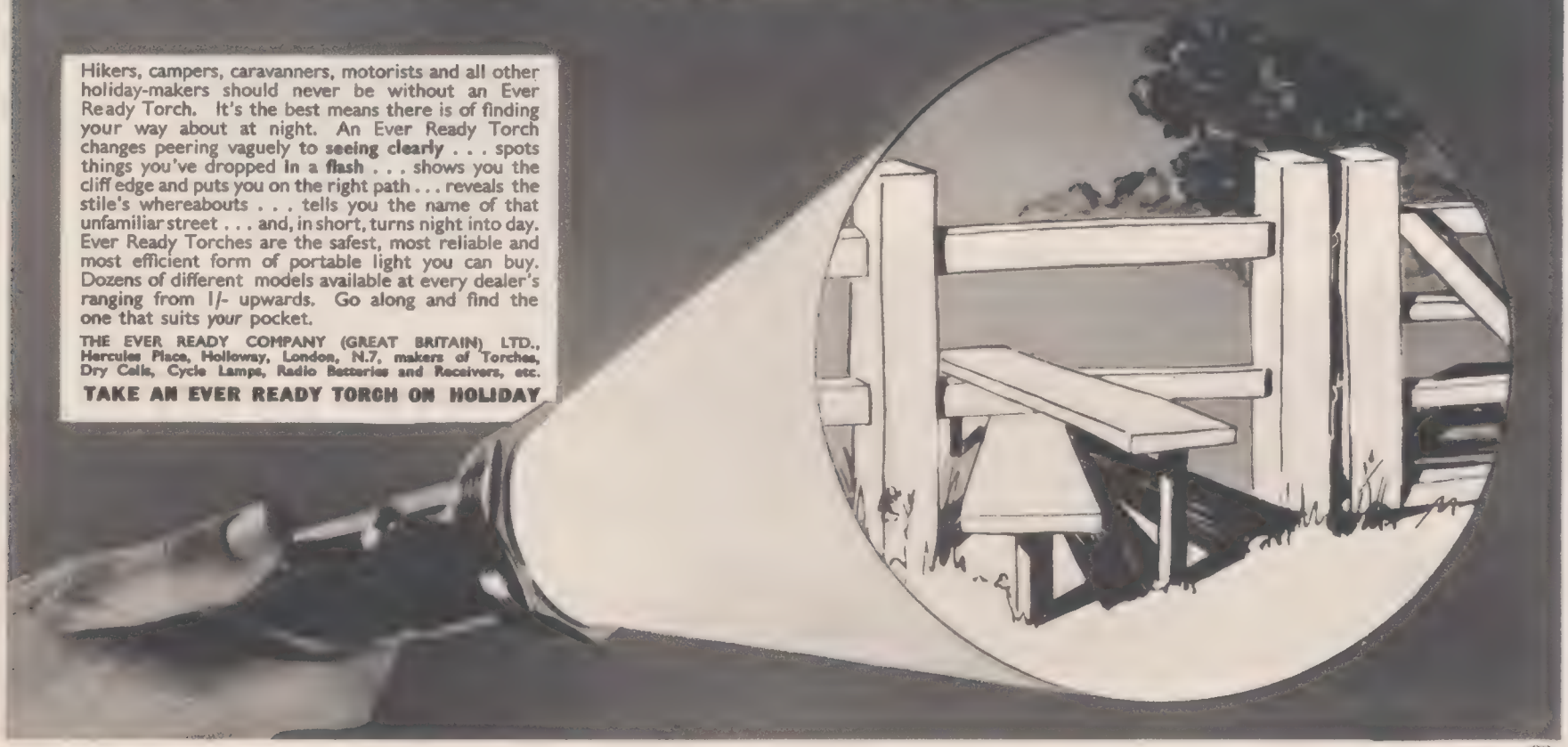

INSIDE DOPE

The case of the mysterious man in suite six kept Frankie Leyburn, dance hostess of the Hotel Colossal, in such a fear that she resorted to burglary

THE restaurant of the Colossal Hotel was filled with the usual hilarious crowd of merrymakers. Frankie Leyburn, the dance hostess, had done her work with her customary efficiency, making introductions and dancing with unattached males. There was an atmosphere of conviviality on and around the dance floor and Frankie felt that she could relax her efforts, for a while.

She was crossing to the table now occupied almost every night by Philip Trent, when a tall good-looking man stopped her.

"May I have the next dance, Miss Leyburn?"

Beneath her straight black fringe, Frankie's eyebrows contracted slightly. She didn't want to dance with Walter Bannion.

"I'm rather tired," she replied. "I was just going to have a rest."

"Oh, come on." His smile was very friendly. "I've been waiting all the evening for this opportunity. I didn't want to intrude while you were so busy."

"Really, Mr. Bannion——"

"Be a sport. Just one."

It was no part of Frankie's job to refuse to dance with wealthy habitues of the hotel. She could not pick and choose. Even if she disliked a man intensely, she must be pleasant to him. And she didn't dislike Walter Bannion. She'd nothing at all against him. He'd always been perfectly respectful to her. It was just that queer business of the photography. . . .

"Please," he insisted.

"All right," she agreed reluctantly. "Just one."

Violins crooned the opening bars of a seductive waltz. Though middle-aged, Walter Bannion was an excellent dancer and his attitude towards his companion everything that could be desired. Indeed, he hardly spoke to her. She enjoyed the waltz. Until she noticed that she was being steered towards a quiet corner of the floor; noticed, too, that a young man, who had just come in, was pointing an expensive-looking camera in her direction.

Ignoring the pressure of Bannion's hand, she swung round with her back to the camera.

"That's the second time this week," she said angrily. "What's the idea?"

He stopped as though surprised.

"What's the trouble, Miss Leyburn?"

"You know perfectly well. Another photograph!"

"I didn't notice—oh! I see." Bannion smiled into her lovely face with its soft, creamy complexion and slightly oblique eyes that gave it an almost oriental fascination. "Why worry about that? You're quite a famous person, you know. Isn't it natural that people should want to photograph you?"

"I can't think of any straightforward and honourable reason why they should be so anxious to photograph me with you," said Frankie, tartly. "That's the end of the dance, Mr. Bannion. Thank you very much."

He made no attempt to detain her when she left him and walked rather hurriedly across the floor. Her face was a little flushed as she sat down beside Philip Trent.

"See that, Pip?" she asked.

There was a puzzled frown on Philip Trent's pleasant features, and the snap with which he closed his cigarette case showed his irritation. He would have given his right hand to take Frankie away from all this. He was a worker himself, however, though wealthy enough to lead a life of idleness, and he knew how hard Frankie had struggled to attain her present position. Fully sympathising with her in her love for her job, he had decided that it would be fatal to make any attempt to hurry her. He believed that she was growing fond of him, that in time she would come to care as he cared. Because of this, the fact that she was at the beck and call of any Tom, Dick or Harry who wished to dance with her, annoyed him.

"Yes, I saw it," he replied. "What's behind it, Frankie?"

"I don't know. I can't understand it at all."

The young man with the camera had vanished. Philip lit a cigarette, gazing at Bannion, who had resumed his seat at a table across the floor.

"Who is he? Know anything about him?"

"No more than I know about other people staying in the hotel. He must have plenty of money. He occupies a private suite."

"Money or not, things aren't as they should be. There's dirty work of some kind going on. I don't want to see you mixed up in a divorce case."

"Lord, no!"

"I can't think of any other reason why he should wish to be photographed with you."

"Nor can I," admitted Frankie. "But I can hardly believe it's that. He's always so decent to me. He treats me—well, like a daughter."

While the band played and people danced, they discussed the curious situation. Although Walter Bannion had made no overtures of any sort to Frankie, the fact remained that on two or three occasions they had been photographed together without her knowledge. These photographs had been reproduced in the illustrated press with the usual kind of caption:

SEEN ABOUT—WALTER BANNION, PLAY-BOY, AND MISS FRANCES LEYBURN

DANCE HOSTESS AT THE COLOSSAL STEPS OUT WITH A FRIEND

Wealthy American Good Judge of English Beauty

The photographs had been snapped during apparently casual meetings in the street, but there could be little doubt that Bannion had deliberately engineered these meetings. Frankie could imagine no reason for this strange conduct, apart from that suggested by Philip. The thought made her very uncomfortable.

BY FRANK KING

ILLUSTRATED BY J. GREENUP, R.I.

Soon after half-past two, the light went out. A few moments later, a car started up behind the building and came into view, making for the main gates. "We're on the right track," breathed Frankie

"There must be something fishy about it all," she decided. "I've had flowers sent to my room, too. Big bunches of them. They've had no cards with them, but I'm sure they've come from Bannion."

"Why do you have anything to do with him?"

"I can't help it, can I? Besides, he's never given me any excuse to snub him. And, after all, we've no proof that those photographs were taken on his instructions."

"I don't think there's any doubt about that," said Philip gravely. "I don't like it, Frankie."

"Neither do I." She shrugged and smiled at him. "Still, don't let's spoil the rest of the evening. Shall we have one together?"

"You bet!" His face cleared as he rose from the table and took her into his arms. "I've been waiting hours for this."

Next morning, a page brought to Frankie's room a thin square parcel.

"Looks like a gramophone record," he suggested.

"It does." She noticed that there was no address on the wrapping paper. "Where's it come from?"

"Gent in suite six, miss."

"Oh. Any message?"

"No." The boy grinned. "He told me I hadn't to say who'd sent it."

"All right, Jimmy. Thanks."

When the boy had gone, Frankie stood looking for a while at the package. She was annoyed. Walter Bannion had no right to do this kind of thing. There was no apparent harm in his sending her a record, but she didn't like the idea at all. She'd take it back to him and return it with a few well-chosen words.

She'd make sure of her facts, however, before doing this. Opening the parcel, she found, as expected, that it contained a gramophone record. The title, "*Ivresse D'Avril*," was strange to her, though she recognised the label of that well-known French recording company *Le Chanson Du Cygne*.

There was no note of any sort in the package. A queer thing to send. Still, Walter Bannion knew that she used a gramophone when giving her dancing lessons. Frankie parcelled the record up again. Then she marched resolutely up to the next floor where suite six was situated.

As she walked along the corridor, the lift doors clanged. Two men emerged and hurried along in front of her. The thought flashed through her mind that they looked like plain-clothes detectives. They knocked on the door of suite six.

She hesitated a moment, then retraced her steps. It was no use calling on Bannion while he had visitors. She couldn't say what she wanted to say to him in public. She went back to her room, waited about an hour, then tried again.

This time she was more successful. Bannion opened the door to her knock and welcomed her with a delighted smile.

"Come in, Miss Leyburn," he urged. "This is a great honour."

There was a chambermaid not far away, obviously interested in the meeting. After a momentary indecision, Frankie passed through the open door into the luxuriously furnished sitting-room.

"I've brought this back," she said at once, proffering the parcel.

It seemed to her that a trace of anxiety showed in his face.

"Why?" he asked sharply, "What's wrong with it?"

"Nothing, so far as I know. But I want you to understand, Mr. Bannion, that this kind of thing must stop. I've no desire to receive any presents, however small, from you. And you've no right to persist in sending them."

His pleasant smile returned.

"I do hope I haven't offended you?"

"You will, if you don't stop sending me things. I know that all those flowers came from you."

"I should hate to annoy you in any way." Bannion took the package from her, broke it in strong hands and threw it on the fire, where it burned lazily. "There! I hope you'll believe me when I say that I didn't realise what an unpleasant construction might be placed on my actions. I assure you that there was no disrespect intended and that you shall have no further cause for complaint."

This was rather unexpected. Frankie had intended telling him a few home truths. But he sounded quite perturbed and his apologetic attitude disarmed her, completely.

"That's all right." She made for the door. "We'll forget all about it."

"Just a moment, Miss Leyburn." Bannion's voice sounded rather excited. "Are you sure about that?"

"About what?"

"You mean that you'll forgive me?"

"Why, of course."

"Well, will you prove it?"

"I don't understand."

"Prove that you no longer think I've designs upon you by having a little supper with me after you're through to-night."

A frown puckered Frankie's smooth brow. That was an old gag. At the same time he sounded quite genuine. It was her duty, if possible, to keep on good terms with all clients of the hotel, and she'd certainly no good reason for turning down the invitation. Besides, she was curious about Bannion now; anxious to learn his reason for showing such an interest in her. If she agreed to his proposal she might have an opportunity of discovering something about this.

"What's the idea of having those photographs published?" she asked.

"Oh, don't worry about those. There won't be any more."

"You admit they were taken on your instructions?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I'll tell you." Bannion caught her hands in his. "But not just now. Give me another day or two and you shall hear the whole story. Now what about to-night?" His face was eager. "Please!"

"Where do you want to take me?"

"How would the *Seventh Heaven* do?"

This was a perfectly reputable night club at which Frankie had frequently spent a busman's holiday. An hour or two there with Bannion couldn't harm anyone.

"All right," she agreed abruptly. "It's a date."

Philip Trent was not too pleased when he heard of the arrangement.

"That looks to me like asking for trouble," he muttered.

Frankie's dark eyes twinkled.

"Don't you think I'm old enough to look after myself?" she asked.

"I hate the thought of your getting mixed up in anything underhand."

"I know," she whispered. "You're a darling, Pip. I'll be very careful."

As a matter of fact there was nothing to be careful about. Bannion's conduct that night was irreproachable. At the *Seventh Heaven* Frankie felt that she was among friends. She knew almost everyone there. What harm could possibly come to her?

She had one little qualm right at the outset. The waiter, taking her order for supper, delayed a moment to gossip.

"Did you hear that we'd been raided, Miss Leyburn?" he asked.

"Heavens, no! When was this?"

"A fortnight ago."

"What had you been doing wrong, Henri?"

"Nothing at all." The man shrugged. "You know that we're always very careful here. But they raided us just the same. At least a dozen of them."

"I saw nothing about it in the papers."

"We managed to keep it out. You see, nothing at all happened. I mean, everything was in order. No one arrested, or anything of that kind. The boss asked the police what they were after, but they wouldn't tell him."

"Sounds as though they might have been searching for someone. A criminal, perhaps."

"That's the conclusion we came to. Anyhow we're hoping it doesn't occur again. It's a very unpleasant sort of thing." The waiter glanced at Bannion. "You were here that night, sir, weren't you?"

"No. I've only been here once. That was over a month ago."

"Sorry, sir. My mistake."

The waiter departed, and Frankie looked curiously at her companion. Somehow his denial hadn't sounded very convincing. And it wasn't often Henri did make a mistake. He'd a wonderful memory for faces.

She soon forgot about this, however, when Bannion exerted himself to entertain her. He was a born raconteur. Apparently he had travelled in every country of the world and brought back a fund of reminiscence from each.

She enjoyed the supper, enjoyed his conversation and enjoyed the few dances they had together. He seemed equally pleased with life. They were both surprised when a casual glance at his watch warned them that it was three o'clock.

"My gracious!" he exclaimed springing to his feet. "I'd no idea it was so late. Do you mind if I telephone?"

"Henri will bring you an instrument to the table," said Frankie. "That is—unless it's private."

"Not at all." He beckoned the waiter. "I promised to ring a friend at half-past two."

Henri brought the telephone and plugged it in. Frankie watched idly as Bannion dialled. Half unconsciously, she noted the number.

The reply came immediately and she could hear that it was a woman's voice.

"Sorry to be so late," said Bannion, with a smile at Frankie. "I'm at the *Seventh Heaven* with a most entertaining young lady and I'm afraid I missed the time.... Yes, the same.... Of course. Everything's perfectly all right.... Yes, that's all. Goodnight."

Frankie looked away as he replaced the receiver. She was not a great believer in feminine intuition, but quite suddenly she had a curious certainty that something was wrong. Bannion was fooling her, using her as a catspaw

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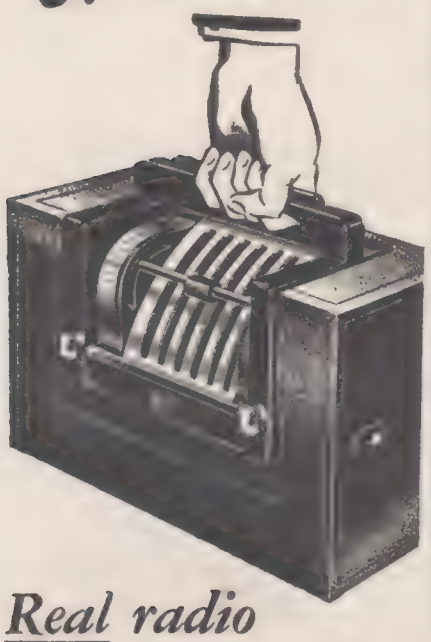

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of some kind. He *had* been here a fortnight ago when the place was raided. Perhaps it was going to be raided again.

"I feel tired," she said. "Do you mind if we go?"

She rather expected him to attempt to persuade her to stay. She was surprised when he rose to his feet at once.

"Why, of course. I forgot that you've been working all evening. I ought to have been more considerate."

Definitely a most enigmatic sort of individual. As he helped her on with her cloak, Frankie felt that she must have misjudged him. All the same, she breathed a sigh of relief when she found herself in the safety of her room at the Colossal.

Philip Trent called round early the next morning to assure himself that all was well with her. As she told him of Bannion's telephone call, his pleasant face grew puzzled.

"Queer time to ring anyone up, wasn't it? And with nothing more to say than a reassuring message? I wish we could find out who that woman was. It might solve the mystery of those photographs."

"I noticed the number he dialled."

"Good girl! What say if we put a call through and see if we can trace her?"

This seemed to be quite a good idea. Frankie picked up the 'phone and dialled the number. A boy's voice answered. "Cardigan Import Company. Who is that?"

"I'm sorry," said Frankie. "I've made a mistake." She replaced the receiver and turned back to Philip. "That doesn't sound right, does it? The Cardigan Import Company. I must have got the number wrong."

"Looks rather like it. All the same ——" He picked up the directory and flipped over the pages rapidly. "Cardigan Import Company, Gosport Avenue, Plumstead. It doesn't seem to fit in with Walter Bannion very well. Still, it might be a good plan to go and have a look at the place. What do you say?"

"I'd like to know whether I did make a mistake."

"Very well. I'll get my car and be round for you in half an hour."

It seemed more than likely that they were on a false trail altogether. Neither of them was very hopeful, as they drove out to Plumstead, of learning anything helpful. Finding Gosport Avenue, they parked the car at the end and walked down. The district was being developed. New factories and warehouses had been erected in more or less sylvan surroundings. The Cardigan Import Company occupied the ground-floor of quite an imposing building, set in a neat garden.

Frankie uttered a little exclamation of delight as she caught sight of a brass plate beside the door, which enumerated the agencies held by the company. Prominent amongst these was the name of the French recording company, *Le Chanson Du Cygne*.

"I didn't make a mistake, Pip," she said. "The record Bannion sent me was one of those."

"Perhaps it was just a coincidence."

"I don't think so. If he were friendly with one of the firm, he'd naturally buy their records. Is there any way we can find out more about these people?"

"Suppose we go in, say we're starting a music shop, and ask for catalogues and terms."

"I'd better not be seen?" said Frankie.

"Why not?"

"Well, if there is any connection between this place and Bannion, there'll be someone here who knows me. Because of the photographs, I mean."

"You're right. I hadn't thought of that. I'll attend to it myself. You go back to the car and wait for me."

It was not long before Philip rejoined her.

"I don't know whether it means anything or not," he said at once. "But the Cardigan Import Company is run by a woman."

He produced a letter-head on which the name of Beryl Feather was printed as proprietor of the company.

"I think we ought to try to find out something about this lady."

"How are you going to do that, Pip?"

"I'll make inquiries in the city this afternoon. Someone may know her."

Frankie had to hurry back to the Colossal to give some dancing lessons, and for the next few hours she was too busy to worry much about the connection between Walter Bannion and Beryl Feather. Later in the afternoon, however, something happened which set her mind working on new and unaccustomed lines.

"Captain Hartman always puts his stowaways to work"

She was out shopping when she became aware that she was being followed. Wherever she went, that furtive figure was not far behind, slipping into a convenient doorway, or pretending to be immersed in the contents of a shop window whenever she looked round. Try as she would she could not shake this shadow off. She did manage to get a good look at him, and her uneasiness increased when she recognised one of the men who had visited Walter Bannion's suite yesterday.

She had thought at the time that he was a plain-clothes man, and now she felt sure of it. But why should the police be interested in her? A little gasp of dismay escaped her as she glimpsed a possible reason. And with this came another thought that sent her hurrying straight back to the Colossal.

She rang up Philip's office at once, and was relieved to find him in.

"Any information about Beryl Feather?" she asked.

"Nothing to mean anything. The Cardigan Import Company has quite a good reputation in the city and Mrs. Feather herself is well known as a capable business woman. That doesn't seem to get us anywhere, does it?"

"No. But I've got an idea, Pip. Could you come round?"

"I'll be with you in ten minutes."

While she waited, Frankie paced anxiously about her room. She was now definitely uneasy. If her theory were right, the whole business was assuming a very ugly complexion. She greeted Philip with evident relief.

"Listen, Pip," she said at once. "I expect you'll think I'm a fool. But I've come to the conclusion that I've got mixed up in something very shady."

Phillip's face grew puzzled as he listened.

"It's a horrible situation for you," he said. "But I must confess that I can't see——"

"Well, suppose for a moment that Bannion is a crook. Suppose the police suspect him and also suspect the fact that he has a woman accomplice."

"Heavens! Do you really——"

"That would explain the photographs, wouldn't it? For some reason he guesses that the police are getting hot, and he attempts to throw them off the scent by making them believe that if he is associated with any woman at all, that woman is me."

"And his real confederate is——"

"Beryl Feather. Precisely."

"You may be right, of course," admitted Philip thoughtfully. "But there's no proof——"

"There's another point that's struck me," interrupted Frankie, excitedly. "Suppose those detectives went up to Bannion's suite yesterday to search it. He was expecting them and got rid of the incriminating evidence by sending it to me."

"The gramophone record?"

"Yes. What could have been wrong with it, I haven't the faintest idea. But remember that he burned it as soon as it was in his possession again. It all fits in, doesn't it? Including his telephone message to Beryl Feather telling her that everything was all right?"

"He waited rather a long time before doing that."

"If he were so very anxious that their association should not be suspected, he wouldn't communicate with her when there was any chance of someone else answering the telephone. Remember, he told me that he should have phoned at half-past two. Isn't it quite likely that this was a prearranged time, that in all probability he telephones her each night at that hour?"

"By Jove, I believe you've got it!" exclaimed Philip. "It all seems to fit."

"Pip, let's have a look into the premises of the Cardigan Import Company and see if we can learn anything about the records they handle?"

"Do a spot of burglary, you mean?"

"Yes."

"All right. I'm game."

At two o'clock the following morning, two figures were lurking in the shrubbery of the garden surrrounding the building in which the Cardigan Import Company was housed. A light showed from one of the windows of this building, and both the watchers guessed that Beryl Feather was inside awaiting her usual telephone call from Walter Bannion.

Soon after half-past two, the light went out. A few moments later, a car started up behind the building and came into view, making for the main gates. Neither of the two figures in the shrubbery stirred until it had disappeared down the avenue.

"We're on the right track," breathed Frankie then.

"Looks like it," Philip replied. "Let's see if there's any way we can get inside."

He led the way forward through the shrubbery. As they cautiously advanced, Frankie suddenly caught his coat.

"I thought I heard something, Pip. Someone moving about quite near to us."

They waited for several minutes in tense silence, but no unusual sound came to their straining ears.

"You must have imagined it, I think," said Philip eventually. "You're not used to this kind of thing."

After a good deal of searching, they found a window with a loose fastening, and Philip managed to slide this back with the blade of his penknife.

"The complete bandit," he murmured, opening the window. "Can you climb in?"

Frankie could, and did. She found herself in a large warehouse, well stocked with all kinds of articles, including many stacks of gramophone records. Philip joined her and flashed a torch around.

"Doesn't seem to be anything wrong here," he commented. "What do we do next?"

"Search for a record of *Ivresse d'Avril*," she replied promptly.

"Let's try the office, then."

One end of the large room had been partitioned off to form an office. The door was locked and after one glance at the Yale latch, Philip gave it up as hopeless. Picking up a small wooden box from a table, he broke a pane of the ground-glass near the door. Then, wrapping a handkerchief round his hand, he thrust it through the jagged opening and turned the latch.

A flash of the torch showed that one wall of the office was occupied by shelves containing hundreds of gramophone records alphabetically arranged. In a very short time they had found one entitled *Ivresse d'Avril*.

"Now, what?" asked Philip.

"Try it out," replied Frankie. "See what's wrong with it."

"Awkward if anyone hears us. Still, I guess you're right."

A portable gramophone stood on a table near the door. Philip wound it up, put in a new needle, and placed the record on the turn-table. The instrument emitted a few scrapes and grunts, but nothing more.

"It's a fake of some sort," he muttered. "I wonder what the idea is."

Suddenly he broke the record in two, and the light of his torch fell on a white powder which trickled from the fracture. He uttered a startled exclamation.

"Dope!"

The record was hollow. He moistened the tip of his finger and tasted the powder which was packed into it.

"Yes, dope. That's the answer to everything, Frankie. A clever way of smuggling the infernal stuff into the country. Someone in the employ of *Le Chanson Du Cygne* adds a few of these faked records to every consignment that comes over. Probably no one in the Cardigan Import Company, except Beryl Feather, knows anything about them. Bannion disposes of the stuff. Gosh! What a scheme!"

"What a scheme, indeed!" A harsh voice came from the darkness. "Put up your hands. Both of you. Don't move or call out, or I be shall compelled to shoot."

Another torch flashed, focusing on Frankie and Philip. In the cone of light glittered the ugly snout of a revolver. Slowly they raised their hands.

"That's good. I don't want to make things any worse than they are. When I heard that you'd been making inquiries here yesterday, Mr. Trent, I decided that I'd better watch the place to-night. I feared that you might have tumbled to something, though I still hoped that you'd not be able to discover the truth. Unfortunately, you have done so and I'm afraid my plans are ruined."

Bannion paused. When he went on again, the harshness had gone from his voice.

"That's not your fault, of course. I don't blame you in any way. All the same, I must protect myself. I promised Miss Leyburn to explain the mystery of those photographs to you. It's really very simple. When the police raided the Seventh Heaven a fortnight ago, it was for my benefit. Somehow they'd received word that I should be there that night with the woman who worked with me. By a piece of good luck, both I and Mrs. Feather managed to escape. As you will understand, I was most anxious that no breath of suspicion should ever blow on her. I hoped to persuade everyone that you had been my companion on that occasion. After all, no harm could come to you through the pretence."

"It was a rotten trick," muttered Philip. "What are you going to do with us now?"

"Fasten you up, I'm afraid. I shall have to get in touch with Mrs. Feather and catch an early plane across to the Continent. I'm sorry to inconvenience you. You'll be released when the staff arrive in the morning. Come this way."

There was nothing else to be done. In spite of his apparent pleasantness, Bannion was desperate. By the light of the torch, Frankie and Philip left the office and walked through the warehouse, with Bannion close on their heels, watching their every move.

Quite suddenly there was a scuffle behind them. Someone muttered an imprecation and the revolver roared. At the same moment, dazzling light flared up. They turned. Bannion was struggling in the grip of two plain-clothes men, while others were converging upon him from different parts of the warehouse.

The struggle did not last long. In a very few moments the criminal was helpless, handcuffed. One of the plain-clothes men turned to Frankie.

"All right, missie," he said. "You're in the clear. We heard all he said to you. We know now that you're not mixed up in this."

"Thank goodness for that, anyway!" Frankie's voice trembled a little. "And thank goodness you were here! How did you manage it?"

"Followed you, missie." The man grinned. "You see, Bannion had fooled us to the extent that we were keeping an eye on you. When I saw you burgle this place, I rounded up some help and came in after you. That's all there is to it and the sooner you're in bed the better. You've got a car at the end of the road, haven't you? Take my advice and get this young man of yours to run you straight back to the hotel."

ROUND THE WORLD ON £100

Continued from page 11.

interior. It is more pleasant to travel by Honolulu rather than by the northern route.

★ It is difficult to give advice on Japan at the moment. This country is most economical for the tourist who is prepared to stop in Japanese hotels, which are spotlessly clean. Three essential places to visit are Tokyo, Nikko, and Kyoto. Train journeys are incredibly cheap and there is an efficient official tourist bureau.

★ Shanghai is out of the picture for the moment, but I do not think the tourist misses much. It was an international port and Hong-Kong is much more interesting. In my own trip I made side trips to Canton and Macao from Hong-Kong, but at the moment this would be impossible. Still, two or three days are well spent in this eastern Gibraltar. Again I suggest staying at a Japanese hotel.

On arrival at Hong-Kong, immediately inquire about ships sailing to Saigon, in Indo-China. Probably a French ship offers accommodation. French ships are odd to the Britisher, still they get you to your destination.

★ This section of the journey is almost the "highspot" of the tour. There is a regular bus service running between Saigon and Angkor, which takes three days, allowing for one whole day in Pnom Penh. The fare is only £2. But by inquiring at the Continental Hotel it is often possible to get a seat in some private car at the same price, or even less. To see Angkor it is necessary to stop at the near-by village of Siemreap. There is a reasonable hotel, apart from an expensive *de luxe* establishment, and it is possible to get natives with trailers to their bicycles who will take one to Angkor (two miles) for a few pence.

From Siemreap to the Siamese border it is necessary to arrange a lift in some private car. There is little difficulty. From the Siamese border to Bangkok there is a train, and travelling cheapest class is perfectly suitable and very economical.

At Bangkok I stayed in a German hotel for 8s. a day, but a Japanese hotel would be even cheaper. Chinese hotels are not advised, for they are not too clean. There is much of interest to see in Bangkok.

From Bangkok to Singapore the journey can be made by rail by way of Penang and Kuala Lumpur, or else direct by sea. The former is more interesting, but the latter cheaper. There is nothing to justify prolonged stops in the Malay States.

★ There is so much shipping at Singapore that there should be no difficulty in securing a passage on a cargo boat at a rate of about 10s. a day. If funds allow, short side trips could be made while the ship is in port from Colombo to Kandy, and in Egypt to Cairo, rejoining the ship at Port Said.

It is scarcely worth spending so many extra days travelling round to England by sea, and the land journey across France will come to about the same cost.

★ A few final hints. The ideal time to make this trip would be between August and January. The East is fairly cool during the English winter, but extremely hot and humid at other times. This is an important point, for there is little pleasure in travelling under unpleasant climatic conditions. The United States is also pleasant in the autumn.

Travel light. A small suitcase and a zip-fastener bag is all the luggage you need. One tweed suit is sufficient. For the hot countries I recommend a Palm Beach suit. Buy a straw "boater" in New York for one dollar and throw it into the sea at Marseilles. If Englishmen in Singapore say you look odd, tell them that you are an American. Take a camera and keep a diary.

This trip should be the most exciting adventure of your life. Make it.

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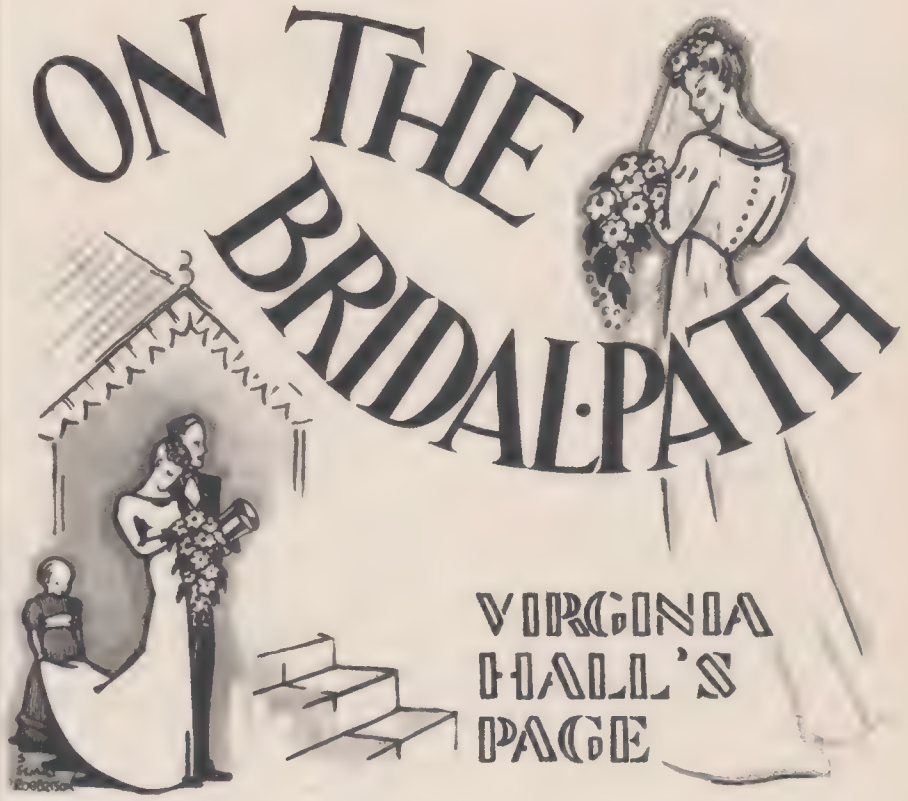
ON THE BRIDAL PATH



VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE

TWO weddings this week have convinced me that this year's June brides are really very lucky, for fashion is well on their side.

Boleros, for instance, are a real gift. The most sophisticated evening frock with the narrowest shoulder straps and the lowest neckline can, by the simple addition of a bolero, be made into a wedding dress sufficiently demure to please the primmest aunt-in-law.

And in this way the wedding dress can be packed and taken away for the honeymoon, making an additional and lovely evening ensemble.

Headdresses for weddings, too, are so simple just now. Real white flowers, such as camellias or lillies clustered on top of a white veil look charming. But the prize for the most enchanting idea of the week must go to a bride who wore a very plain dress. On top of her equally plain veil, fastening it to her blonde hair were two small, white doves. The result was really very lovely.

Bridesmaids no longer have to buy great ornate hats which, having been worn once, become dust collectors for years afterwards, because none likes to throw away an expensive hat just in case the occasion *might* arise when it would be suitable to wear it again. But how often does that occasion materialise?

Now a bridesmaid wants only a circle of net a yard in diameter, and a posy of flowers, either real or artificial. The centre of the net goes on the crown of the head and hangs all round almost to the shoulders and covering the face. It's kept in position by the flowers, which are pinned firmly right on top of the head. Bouquets of the same flowers complete the pretty picture.

★ I've got something quite new in the way of make-up to tell you about this week. . . .

Have you noticed on the films the fashion for shiny lips? Joan Crawford has them and so does Marlene Dietrich. In fact all the "glamour" girls have them.

It is the invention of Max Factor, the man who is known as the Hollywood Beauty Genius, and it is intended to make your lips appear shiny, just like the lips of a film star. In the words of this beauty expert "To have shiny lips is one way to have glamour." On the screen these shiny lips have been cultivated by all the stars. Now this new preparation has arrived and shiny lips may be worn in the street.

And this is how Max Factor tells you to use this new make-up :—

"First of all, apply your lipstick very carefully, removing all surplus with a tissue. Be sure that your lips are absolutely dry. Then apply a small amount of this gloss-giving preparation over your lipstick. It will also prevent dryness and chapping of the lips and, at the same time, will give a brilliant glistening effect which, on some women, is very attractive. Especially the Joan Crawford type!"

Actually Joan Crawford applies it by patting it on her lips; never by smearing it on. It is particularly effective with an evening make-up. So if you want glamour, write to me, marking your envelope "Gloss." If you will enclose 2s. 6d., I will send you post free a little box with the marvellous new preparation.

★ For months Paris has been preparing for the visit of the king and queen next week. When the visit was first scheduled for the end of June, the Paris City Fathers, after their expressions of delight, looked at each other in consternation. For they feared that Paris would still be tearing down the Exposition of 1937 and what can be worse than the vestiges of former glories. The city's main thoroughfare, the Avenue des Champs-Elysees, would be just about half repaved!

So they really got down to work and the result is in itself an object lesson of what the French can do when they make up their minds to it. Twenty-six men have laid more than 5,000,000 pieces of small square paving stones in the Avenue des Champs-Elysees. Laying these stones is a specialised job and usually the trade unions concerned forbid the laying of more than a certain number of square metres every day, but in view of the royal visit special permission was given so that the avenue had its gala paving entirely completed nearly three months ago.

There has also been great activity in furnishing for the state visit. A large canopied bed, once used by Marie Antoinette, which has long been on view in Versailles, has been carefully carried to Paris to be installed in the sixteenth century bedroom that has been restored for the use of the queen during her four days in Paris.

A bed that belonged to Napoleon, has been placed in the empire bedroom for the King. French museums and the National Furniture Storehouses have been combed for pieces to fit into the period ensembles.

An entire wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been redecorated. The suite reserved for the queen is in lime green, known to be her favourite colour, with grey-green carpets, beige curtains, and white and gold ceilings.

When the wing was being arranged, it was found that certain elements of modern comfort were lacking. Thus the queen will find herself with a palatial bathroom with a fireplace at one end and at the other a silver bathtub with mosaic design and toilet articles of silver or worked glass. Her rooms, like those of the king, overlook the rose gardens.

The king's bedroom will be in red and gold. His bathroom will have black walls, and a gold tub.

★ When I mentioned hairnets last year, thousands wrote to me for samples and I made up my mind then to repeat my offer this year so that you could all have hairnets for the summer when most of us go hatless whenever we can.

But until the other day I forgot all about my good intentions.

My memory was jogged while I was down among the boats. I've told you before about my visits to friends who are lucky enough to possess a motor cruiser, and I was standing on the quay watching the sailing boats riding in the teeth of a gale when a dinghy came alongside and a girl climbed ashore.

First her head appeared. And what a head ! Slick as you make 'em. Blonde and beautifully shiny and neat and in all that wind, too. I went to get a closer look. Yes, she was wearing a net exactly the colour of her hair.

That is the crux of the whole thing. It's when nets are not absolutely indistinguishable from your hair that they look so tragic. Meanwhile I said to myself, "That reminds me."

The hairnets I recommended last year are made in so many shades that unless you have tartan hair you simply must find one to match your particular locks. You can, in fact, choose from sixteen shades; light blonde, ash blonde, pale blonde, light brown, medium brown, dark brown, very dark brown, black, light medium auburn, dark auburn, ash, single white, double white, light brown-grey, medium brown-grey, dark brown-grey.

Also, there are three sizes of this extra fine net, so you see you really must be suited. Anyway, write to me, stating the desired shade and enclosing 3d. in stamps and I will have two sample nets (one shingle size and one average fitting) sent to you. Mark your envelopes "Net."

★ Friends of mine, with a cottage in the country, have been doing things with a room that was once just an untidy old junk deposit.

They have had the entire room distempered off-white and installed limed oak furniture with armchairs and settee covered with off-white material. Large, white vases full of flowers, mixed in variety and colour, finish the furnishings.

The limed oak dresser carries brightly coloured pottery and two or three old coloured maps of the district hang on the walls. Last, but not least, each of the small chairs has a different, brightly-coloured, leather seat.

★ By now you are probably cursing the day you decided to plant nasturtiums to provide some bright colour in your garden. For they certainly *do* spread all over the place. But please don't cut them all away or be too drastic in your uprooting. Wait until you have collected a few of the seeds, for when picked they make a splendid substitute for capers.

You want to collect them when they are a good size, but still green. Pick them so that they have a short piece of the stem left on each. Wash them well and leave them to soak in strong brine for about two days. Then rinse and leave them in cold water overnight. Next day, drain them and dry them in a soft cloth and pack into small, dry bottles.

To make the pickle to add to the seeds, add to each pint of vinegar twelve peppercorns, a small piece of horse-radish, 1 oz. salt, a bay leaf, a blade of mace and, if possible, a few leaves of tarragon. Of course, you have to use your own judgment regarding the quantity of vinegar needed for you must have enough to fill the bottles containing the seeds.

Now you must heat all the above ingredients to boiling point and let them simmer for a few minutes. Heat the bottles with the nasturtium seeds and then fill them to overflowing with the liquid. Cork tightly and store in a cool place. The seeds must be kept for at least four months before they are used—but caper sauce is grand in the winter !

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help in such matters

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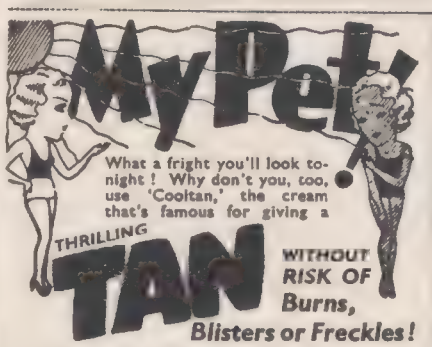

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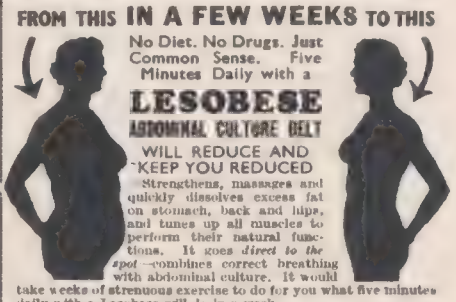

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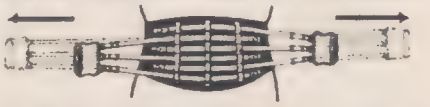

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THEY SAILED FOR SENEGAL

BY WILSON MACARTHUR

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

DISASTER has overtaken the *Medusa*, a frigate carrying the newly-appointed governor, Col. Julian Schmaltz, his family, and a complement of soldiers and civilians, to Senegal, a colony returned to the French by the British after the final defeat of Napoleon.

Through the incompetency of her commander, the Vicomte de Chaumareys, the frigate has been wrecked on the Arguin bank, off the coast of Africa, and it is decided that the vessel shall be abandoned.

Eventually men are crowded on to a raft and the boats are occupied by the governor and his people, while a few terror-striken people remain on the wreck, refusing to be moved. The convoy moves off, but the boats are so overloaded that they are forced to cut the raft adrift.

After battling with a storm all night, the boats become separated and the governor, in consultation with de Chaumareys, decided to proceed to St. Louis by boat and not risk landing on an inhospitable coast.

Next morning, however, land is sighted by soldiers on the sloop and, when shallow water is reached, they clamber overboard and wade ashore, preferring the hardships of a long march in a wild country to the hazards of the sea.

Meanwhile, the other boats have reached St. Louis and the British commander of the garrison is preparing to welcome the new governor.

★

"GENTLEMEN," the governor began next morning, stifling an immense yawn as he glanced, with some resentment, at the clock, which pointed to six-thirty. "It would appear that the other boats have failed to keep us company. Although it was understood that we should travel together and the order was definitely given to abandon the idea of a caravan and proceed here by sea, they elected to fall behind—for what reason, we can only guess.

"In spite of this breach of duty, however, this gross disregard of their commander's orders, it seems to me advisable that we should send in search of them, if not for the sake of their officers then for the sake of the innocent people on board, who cannot be held responsible for the rebellious conduct of those officers."

De Chaumareys concurred. He thought this was admirably put.

He glanced round the faces at the table, with a slightly haughty smile. It was the morning after their arrival in port, and he considered that he had shown admirable devotion in turning out of his bunk at such an hour to discuss the measures to be taken to secure the safety of the remaining boats.

De Venancourt tapped impatiently with his finger-nails on the edge of the table. He did not trust himself to speak. He could not look de Chaumareys in the eyes, for fear of bursting out into a tirade of expostulation and denunciation.

De Parnajon listened with his head bent, his eyes upon the table.

Another member of the conference, the *ordonnateur* d'Einville, signified his agreement with the governor's suggestion.

"Undoubtedly, gentlemen, we must make every effort to bring them safely to port."

"Then, gentlemen, what do you propose?"

"Do you think they may have landed?" de Parnajon inquired.

"Why should they? They were ordered to proceed by sea."

"They had the necessary supplies—provisions, water?"

"But naturally," de Chaumareys answered blandly. "That was the affair of their officers."

"Then it seems to me that the only thing to do is to send one of the ships to look for them."

That was commonsense. Schmaltz seized on it immediately.

"Your brig, monsieur, is now in the service of the Colony. It is, therefore, fitting that the task should be hers."

De Parnajon, regretting his impulsiveness, bowed. There was nothing to say. Schmaltz promptly pulled paper and ink over and began to write. He was the man of action now, taking charge, assuming control and responsibility, displaying all the qualities necessary in the governor of a large and important colony.

By evening, the brig was ready, and at nine o'clock she beat out of the harbour and set her course north-north-west. Lieutenant Reynaud, with his sailing master and six men of the crew, accompanied her in order to direct her to the *Medusa*.

Thereafter, the Governor felt himself free to attend to his own business.

Next morning, at 9.15, the *Echo* got under way, and came up the roads, anchoring off the bar. A quarter of an hour later, Schmaltz, de Chaumareys, de Venancourt and d'Einville went down into a canoe, handled by a native crew.

The blacks, chanting their monotonous paddling song, headed for the bar, and the light craft plunged into the surf. Steady hands, keen eyes, perfect nerve were required for the dangerous passage; but in a few moments she was through, dancing easily on the calmer waters of the inner harbour and, about noon, her passengers, considerably shaken and wet, but none the worse for their exciting adventure, came close.

Brereton was ready to receive them on the shore. He had been prepared for a formidable expeditionary force, complete with landing parties of troops and a great show of strength which would give the handing over of the Colony the appearance of a capitulation. Instead, these four men, somewhat sodden and bedraggled from their passage through the surf, and very far from confident about their reception, presented themselves. No trace here of the *hauteur*, the overbearing pride of a regime which his own government had replaced in power and which, in consequence, now that it felt itself no longer dependent upon British charity, threatened to become insufferable in its condescension to the nation of shopkeepers.

He received Colonel Schmaltz with every possible courtesy and kindness. He refused to listen to talk of business, of the matter that had brought him there, and insisted that the day was one that called for celebration.

"To-morrow," he said, with a wide smile. "There is plenty of time to-morrow. To-day we must consecrate to the pleasure of receiving you here, gentlemen."

De Venancourt acted as interpreter. The Frenchmen were relieved by Brereton's affable manner and readily assented to his proposals.

All the same, Brereton was curious. He wanted details of the wreck. He wanted details of the remainder of the frigate's complement. He became grave when he heard what had happened—or what de Chaumareys and Schmaltz, through de Venancourt, chose to say had happened.

He became immediately no longer a courteous host, entertaining distinguished visitors. He acted.

"These people may land from the boats. If so, they are attempting a very difficult journey overland. I shall dispatch a search party with provisions and clothes for them immediately."

He wasted no time. An Irish planter, Karnet, who styled himself "merchant captain," was placed in command of a small caravan, consisting of himself and a few *marabouts*, Moors of European origin, whose pure breeding showed in their broad foreheads, straight noses and thin lips. They were mounted on camels and carried with them provisions, water, clothes and money.

The Frenchmen watched their departure with interest, saw them cross the narrow arm of the river and set off northwards, at speed. Thereafter, pressed by the British governor to accept a cordial invitation to lunch next day—since Brereton was exceedingly anxious to hear more of the ill-fated *Medusa* and her people—they returned to the corvette and discovered to their delight that in their absence the remaining ship of the squadron had quietly arrived and dropped anchor beside them.

The *Loire*, under M. Gisquel-Destouches, had succeeded in overcoming all the dangers of the voyage and now, three days late, was safely at her destination. She had been compelled by the storms to take refuge in Portendick for a while before continuing down the coast to St. Louis.

She had for some considerable time tacked back and forth in the vicinity of the Arguin Bank on her way to Portendick, but no one had noticed any sign of the wreck, the raft, or the boats.

Hunger. It came to those on the raft, with as low, gnawing ache, a gradual

Lavillette retired to little distance and sat down, nursing his sabre, prepared for treachery, but determined to have no hand in what was about to take place. The rest set to work, led by Jean Charles, who proceeded systematically

constriction of the stomach. Shoulders grew hunched, knees drawn up, chins sunk on chests. Men folded their arms over their stomachs, squeezing themselves, gripping themselves tightly to ease the ache.

A soldier unslung his shoulder-strap, began gnawing it, paying no attention to his comrades who stared at him with stupid, lifeless eyes.

Others seized their cartridge pouches, or began to chew at the filthy leather of their helmets. Officers and civilians, keeping a little apart, their numbers still intact, watched the men apathetically. They were growing weak, they could no longer force their minds to think, could no longer hope. They lay beside the mast, enervated, sunk into a stupor from which they were roused suddenly by a singular spectacle.

A black soldier, Jean Charles, huge and powerful and still vigorous, a man of much strength of character, was crawling on hands and knees towards one of the corpses that lay, unnoticed, upon the raft. He had a knife in his hand.

He approached slowly, infinitely slowly. His immense strength had gone, he could only drag himself along with difficulty; but his face was lifted, his eyes fixed in an intent stare upon the still corpse.

His lips were drawn away from his teeth, through which his breath hissed painfully, for the slightest exertion now taxed the strength of even the most powerful. Watched by eyes hypnotised by a kind of remote horror, he reached the corpse. He crouched for a long time, gathering his strength; then he bent over.

His knife dug into a vein. He lowered himself, put his lips against the opened flesh, began to suck. . . .

They watched, in silence, almost with curiosity. A man was gaining sustenance, defeating starvation, before their eyes. He was saving his own life, stealing a march on them all. Horror faded, replaced by envy.

Some of the soldiers, hesitating, spell-bound, began to advance, their strength returning at the promise of nourishment. Then there was a sudden concerted rush. But they could not swallow, they could not copy the black's example.

He alone could satisfy the desperate hunger that tortured him, he alone had the strength, the direct simplicity of mind, for so gruesome a feast. The others withdrew a little, keeping back from him, watching him with avid, longing eyes. A gulf seemed to have opened between them, where no division had ever been felt before; they realised the inhibitions imposed upon them by civilisation, which to Jean Charles was only a thin veneer, easily cast off.

The day was glorious—brilliantly hot, with now a flat calm, a sea that shot glittering arrows of reflected sunlight into their faces, that was spangled with the jewelled sunlight. A sky clear, dazzling and cloudless, the horizon lost in a soft haze.

A group of soldiers congregated, crouching on the raft. They muttered together, casting nervous, troubled, suspicious and hostile glances towards their officers, who watched them apathetically.

"Cut them up," a man whispered, his voice rasping in his parched throat. "Cut them up and dry them in the sun. . . ."

Eyes lit up. Here was salvation, they had been shown the way. They crawled towards the heap of corpses once more, and this time they set to work, systematically, stripping the flesh, placing it where it could dry in the terrific heat, so that it would be edible. The deck of the raft was stained red, while this butcher's work went on.

Now the meat could be swallowed. The soldiers helped themselves, silently; the officers and civilians remained apart, refusing to join in this desperate feast. They continued to watch, hopeless eyes turning ever and anon to the empty sea, searching, searching for the sight that alone could bring life back into their veins—a sail upon the horizon. The horizon remained empty.

The day passed, infinitely slowly. The hours dragged. The worst pangs of their hunger appeased, the men crawled away to lie down, to stretch themselves out and try to sleep. The group in the centre also

composed itself, seeking sleep, praying for even a few hours of oblivion during which they could escape from the ravaging pangs of their hunger.

Night came. Night stretched away into an eternity, in which the raft floated, scarcely moving, upon a tranquil sea. There was barely any wind, although what little there was came steadily out of the west, was bearing them steadily towards the land, towards salvation.

Morning came again, dragging itself out of the sea, out of the invisible Sahara, a morning merciless and terrible. Still the flat calm of a sea silvered over now by the first daylight, a sky without cloud, its vivid blue, as the light strengthened, enamelling slowly the entire dome that closed them in, that seemed to form a barrier, a solid wall between them and the world they had known.

Men, staggering to their feet, drew together in conference. A decision had to be taken. Something had to be done.

A number of non-commissioned officers had been conducting, quietly, a search of the raft, gathering together what they could. They came forward now, displaying their treasures—an ounce of gunpowder, a steel, a musket flint, a handful of tinder, some pieces of dry rag. They staved in an empty cask, soaked it with water and covered it with wet cloths to prevent its catching fire, and with this for an oven they made a sort of cooking range upon another cask.

The fire was lit. They began cooking the meat, carefully, and doling it out. Now the officers and civilians no longer held back. Here was food and their bodies craved food; without food they would die very soon. The men had no qualms. They ate, stolidly, their faces dull, bestial, without emotion, without imagination. The others imitated them. One forgot that this was human flesh, the flesh of one's shipmates who had been killed, who had died in that terrific mêlée in the dark.

Their hunger appeased, the survivors rested. They could do nothing; and in any case they no longer had the strength for any continued effort. The raft drifted.

Suddenly, towards four o'clock in the afternoon, a sailor pointed, with a sharp cry of renewed excitement. A shoal of flying fish appeared, silvering the surface of the sea now once more blue and gold; the shoal was heading directly for the raft. As it came up, some of the fish landed on deck, others dived below the raft and remained there, taking cover.

One could see them, swimming about just beneath, through the interstices of the planks. Here and there one could reach a hand down, one could snatch. . . . Everyone began, feverishly, to fish. In a short time over two hundred had been caught and thrown into an empty barrel.

Presently, the men began splitting them open and devouring the roes, while others were cooked on the fire, which still burned. It seemed almost as if the future were secured, they had discovered how to continue to exist upon the raft until she reached land. Hope revived, gloom dispersed and, nourished and revitalised by this unexpected feast, they began to think, once more, of safety, of salvation.

But suddenly a catastrophe happened. The under cask, unnoticed, had caught fire. Before they could interfere, it had been burnt out, the cooking-range was completely destroyed. Henceforth, everything they consumed would have to be eaten raw. . . .

Savigny had not forgotten the many warnings that had been given him, had not overlooked the one thing that he considered vital to survival on the raft. The weak, the feeble, the light-headed must be sacrificed. This was no time for queasiness, for softening. Stern reality demanded stern measures; and with the fourth dawn a dozen men were discovered dead upon the raft. Men who had grown enfeebled, who had been unable to do their share of whatever little work had to be done on board, men whose chances of survival were slight.

Their bodies, with the exception of the fattest, were thrown into the sea, among the hungry sharks that still waited, patiently, for these scraps the raft continued to offer them.

The new régime had commenced.

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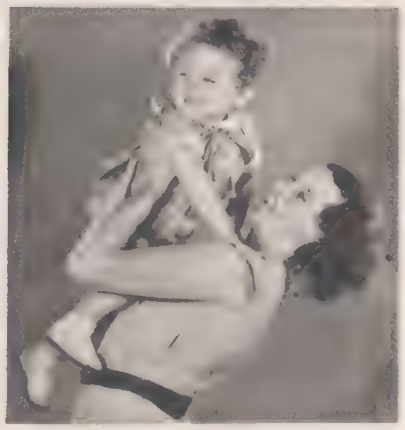

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Savigny was in command, absolutely; and Savigny had no illusions about the course he must pursue. The fewer who remained on the raft, the better their chances of escape.

The day passed, utterly without incident, dragging its slow length hour after leaden hour, until night came, bringing temporary respite, bringing relief at least from the torrid heat, from the burning sun that scorched their dry skins and trebled the agonies of thirst.

Another day came, and passed, marked only by a single incident, when a Spanish soldier, suddenly going mad, hurled himself, with a series of diabolical screams, into the sea. He went down, came to the surface struggling, flinging himself about wildly, his mouth opening for another volley of maniacal yells; and a black triangle made a clean-cut ripple on the water, a great shadowy body gleamed in the depths, turned half over to display the white belly. The enormous jaws opened, lazily, closed with a snap upon one wildly threshing leg; and with a last scream, in a froth of bloody foam, the soldier disappeared.

Almost immediately, the tranquil night was riven by cries and shouts and curses, by the stamping of feet, the hoarse breathing of desperate men.

A Spaniard, half-demented, rushed towards the mast, threw his arms round it, clung to it, babbling. Then, brandishing a knife, he made the sign of the Cross and prepared to hurl himself upon the officers. The sailors, never in league with the soldiers and still, in spite of their position and the treatment they had suffered, rather inclined to support Coudin, since he was their only natural leader on board, seized the Spaniard, disarmed him, and heaved him overboard.

Two of the sailors approached the officers to make a report.

"They're going to attack us. They're going to pitch us all into the sea," they declared. "We overhead them. They mean to get ashore—the black fellows say it isn't far—and then the negroes are going to lead them across the desert. They say they know the way, they're used to the country. But they know they can't get far without money. So they're going to fling us all into the sea before we come ashore and then they'll take that bag there, and be able to pay their way over the desert. . . ."

The bag, a large sack, contained all the money and jewellery on board, which had been collected together in this way for safety and to ensure that nothing was lost when any unfortunate was carried away by the sea. Every penny they could scrape together would be needed to buy their safety from the Moors, if they ever reached land.

The bag had been lashed to the mast and hung there, tantalisingly, representing considerable wealth, representing security, food, clothing, nourishment, every assistance—when once one had got ashore. . . .

So this was what the murmuring had been about. This was the wild plan the soldiers had been hatching, over there, while they squatted in groups and listened to their black comrades! A cold fury seized upon Savigny and he held himself in readiness, determined that, having undergone so much, having held the upper hand so long, he would never succumb to those misguided brutes, those cut-throat ruffians who were incapable of thinking, of realising facts and acknowledging that their only hope of salvation lay in submission to the one man who did realise facts, who was capable of thinking.

An Italian, servant of one of the officers, who had come from the light artillery of Murat, wrapped himself in his cloak and walked swiftly to the bow of the raft. He had been privy to the conspiracy.

"We are lost!" he cried simply. "It is all over."

Then he leapt into the sea, and disappeared immediately.

The men, realising that they had been betrayed, that their intention had become known, hesitated no longer. A sudden uproar, a frenzied shouting, and they charged, believing that this was their only hope, that unless they struck the first blow and kept together, they would all be massacred by their officers.

The handful of sailors had now definitely thrown in their lot with the officers, and formed a first line of defence. The crazed mob hurled itself upon this defence, and immediately the defence became of itself an assault, the officers pressing from behind, rushing to meet the soldiers, roused to a cold fury that would show no mercy. In the dark, the carnage commenced once more; but at last it was over, at last the victory was decisive, the mutiny was finished, there would be no more opposition, no more rebellion, no more taking sides.

When dawn came only thirty people remained alive upon the raft. The planks ran with blood, were strewn with the attenuated and emaciated bodies of the slain.

Thirty people—twenty-nine men and one woman. One hundred and seventeen men perished in five days . . . how long before the raft drifted upon the face of the Atlantic, silent, dead? She floated now, no longer awash. There was room to move, at least, room to breathe; but no one had the strength to move, many had barely the strength to breathe. At what a cost had they attained this relief!

Men lay on their faces, groaning in their last agony, expiring slowly, some few blessedly unconscious, others, without the power to cry out, twitching a little as they lay, racked with pain, tortured by hunger, by thirst.

Movement was torture. Throughout all these days, those who were not able to keep their positions in the centre of the platform had been constantly wading, sometimes even waist-deep, in the water. The sea-water had stripped the skin off the soles of their feet, off their legs. Wounds, sabre cuts, gashes, bruises, festered as the salt bit into them. The sun, coming up strong and brilliant and pitiless, dried their torn clothes upon them, dried up their skin, burned them and raised enormous blisters from which there could be no possible relief. In a few hours thirst gripped them by the throat, their tongues swelled, filling their parched mouths and fever burned in their eyes.

The *cantinière*, crippled by a broken thigh which had been crushed between two of the planks, lay beside her husband, still attempting to nurse him, to do what she could to ease the agony of the wound

in his head. He was barely conscious, drifting off now and again into a delirium in which he was too weak to emit more than a croaking whisper, too weak to struggle, to move upon the hard planks.

Corréard's workmen were in almost equally bad case. Unused to the rigours and hardships of a campaign, alien to the sea so that they were entirely unaccustomed to such exposure, they had not the resources of the soldiers and sailors, for whom this ordeal was only an aggravation of conditions of life to which they were accustomed. Besides, the officers had at least enjoyed the advantage of the platform, on which it was possible to keep tolerably dry, now that the seas had gone down and no longer swept over the whole raft.

Correard did his best for them; but he, too, was in no case to render assistance to anyone. Almost alone, Savigny and Jean Charles, were capable of movement, capable of connected thought, still clinging firmly to their determination.

The hours dragged, in a stupor of misery. The men lay about, exposed to the full fury of the sun, unable to find shelter, too weak to move, completely exhausted by the terrific effort of the night, by the fury that had upheld them during the hours of combat and slaughter.

Slowly the sun wheeled overhead, slowly it declined towards the horizon, until, a circle of gold painted upon an inverted brazen bowl, its rim touched the pale water.

Slowly it sank, until its upper limb alone remained; then even that vanished, and relief came. A faint breeze, faintly cool, lifted the drooping sail, filled it, causing a down-draught that was like wine to the sufferers grouped round the mast. Savigny stirred.

Three of the lieutenants dragged themselves painfully up, stared around with lacklustre, sunken eyes. Others roused themselves and Savigny drew aside the three officers and Jean Charles, and began to speak to them, quietly, without emotion.

"We have twelve fish and enough wine for four days. That is all."

Twelve fish—thirty people; and the fish little larger than sardines.

"What is to be done?"

Savigny shrugged.

"There are at least fifteen people on board who are going to die."

He was a surgeon, he could speak with authority.

"What chance have they? Their wounds are festering, turning septic. Without proper care, without immediate nourishment and drink, they cannot live. They cannot survive more than a day or two at best. . . . And they will die in slow agony."

Something of his purpose began to filter into the minds of the others. They grew alert, they started to listen more closely, leaning forward, instinctively casting furtive glances at the poor wretches of whom Savigny spoke.

"Then . . ."

"Precisely. Among—fifteen of us, those twelve fish and the remaining wine might do some good. We should have a chance of survival. Among thirty—no chance at all."

"They will die in any case. . . ."

"Of course. It is a question of *when*. If they continue to drag out their existence a day or so more, we must share with them the food and the wine. And we shall all perish. If they die now. . . ."

"Understood. . . . Then what do you propose?"

Again Savigny shrugged.

"There is only one thing to do."

He looked round the faces pressing close to him—a ring of haggard, avid, savage faces, bearded or already shapeless with the stubble of five days' growth, hair long and lank and tangled and matted, cheeks sunken, lips drawn back from snarling teeth, eyes red and glaring and desperate.

Those heads nodded, slowly. It was agreed. . . .

Some of the sailors had drawn close. All who could stand now had joined the sinister group—fifteen men. Fifteen scarecrows, ragged, wild, and terrible. Savigny examined those faces, seeking the most brutish, the most determined, the least humane—if, indeed, any humanity could be said to linger in those snarling, emaciated features.

During the heat of the day, they had

not attempted to eat; and now, by common consent, they delayed their evening meal of dried flesh, until it should not be necessary to share it among thirty people.

Savigny's eyes rested, for a long moment, on the black soldier. Jean Charles kept his own eyes steadily upon the surgeon, unflinching, and Savigny inclined his head slightly. Jean Charles nodded, very slowly, and rose to his feet.

Words were unnecessary. The task had been settled, the executioner appointed. Savigny glanced at the ring of faces again and again his eyes rested for a moment, again his head moved, very slightly; again a man nodded. In the end, three sailors joined Jean Charles, to assist in the task.

Only then Savigny spoke.

"It is understood, gentlemen, that when the work is finished all weapons will be thrown overboard, with the exception of one sabre which we must keep for cutting up our . . . food?"

They bent their heads in agreement. They murmured a promise. Savigny, quietly, made them take an oath. He was fully alive to the perils of the situation, he was running no unnecessary risks.

Perhaps because they realised their own weakness, Jean Charles and his helpers selected, as their first victim, the least enfeebled of the doomed people, the man who might be expected to resist most strongly—Lavillette, Corréard's chief workman, who had rescued the *cantinière's* husband during the night, who had rallied to his superior's support and had done such excellent work.

Lavillette was wide awake. Too weak to join the group around Savigny, he had nevertheless watched with acute interest, had observed the furtive glances cast over hunched shoulders, had seen the surgeon's choice being made. He had been unable to overhear a word of what was said, but his suspicions were alive, he was on his guard. When he saw the negro and his three companions approaching him, armed and intent, he realised his danger instantly.

He staggered to his feet.

One of the sailors was unarmed, but, imagining himself strongly supported, advanced too rapidly. Lavillette, encompassing a terrific effort, hurled himself upon this man and, before the others could interfere, dragged him down at the side of the raft and forced his head over.

The workman had been strong, a man of splendid physique; his fingers still retained some of their former strength. While the negro and the two remaining sailors, hampered by the danger of wounding or killing their comrade, were trying to drag the desperate man away, Lavillette succeeded in his design.

The sailor's body fell limp. He had been throttled and drowned.

Immediately the workman was on his feet. He hurled himself upon another sailor, who brandished a sabre, but whose hand was unsteady from weakness. Lavillette wrenched the weapon out of his grasp, swung it once, and split his head open almost to the eyebrows, with a single blow. Then he whirled to face the remaining two.

He was prepared to sell his life dearly. Corréard, who had watched listlessly, knowing himself incapable of interfering, lucky, indeed, not to be among the list of the doomed, came forward now.

"Stop!" he cried. "In the name of God. . . ."

Savigny gave a short, bitter laugh. His butchers had botched their work. But at any rate two superfluous men had been got rid of! Lavillette, who had accomplished this excellent result, deserved to live, if only for the good service he had performed. One could offer him his life, in exchange for the two he had taken.

"Very well," the surgeon said abruptly. "Leave him alone, Jean Charles. You, Lavillette—we'll give you your life on one condition—that you help us to get rid of the other dozen. . . ."

Lavillette, as abruptly, refused. Sabre in hand, he awaited the attack. It did not come. Savigny had no mind to see the raft given over to another wholesale massacre, and in face of such determination he felt his only course was to capitulate.

"All right," he grunted. "Let him alone."

Lavillette retired to a little distance and sat down, nursing his sabre, prepared for treachery, but determined to have no hand in what was about to take place.

"Our gardener's name is Frankenstein"

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The rest set to work. Led by Jean Charles, they proceeded systematically to massacre the unfortunate wretches who lay moaning upon the raft. One after another was dispatched and thrown overboard. The unhappy *cantinière*, who had survived so much, was one of the first to go, along with her unconscious husband.

The work was done. The survivors embraced each other, with tears in their eyes, and knelt in prayer, thanking God for their continued existence, thanking God for having given them the strength to carry out their work of mercy. Then, each secretly terrified of his fellows, each conscious of the reality of his position and dreading to find himself the next object of mercy, they made haste to carry out their pact.

Lavillette was accepted. He had had no hand in the murders, but the numbers were sufficiently reduced by now, there was no point in bearing enmity. His refusal to take a hand was tacitly forgotten, and he saw that, so far as there was any security on the raft, he shared it to the full with the others.

The weapons, all but one sabre, were cast into the sea.

In view of his position of authority, as technically in command, midshipman Coudin had not been among the slaughtered. He was gravely injured, he could not assist himself in any way, and was in fact much nearer death in all appearance than some of those who had been sacrificed; but his companions were officers and, however much they had abandoned all their instincts, they had not yet reached the point where they could bring themselves to murder the man who had been put in command of them.

Apart from Jean Charles, executioner of his comrades, not a single soldier remained of the African Battalion. Every one had perished. The survivors on the raft, in addition to Coudin and the negro, were: Savigny, himself, Corréard, Captain Dupont, Lieut. Lheureux, Sub-lieuts. Lozach and Clairet, the marine deputy Griffon du Bellai, sergeant-major Charlot, master-gunner Courtade, master-carpenter Lavillette, the sailor, Coster, the pilot, Thomas and the hospital overseer, François.

To support life upon the raft, they divided among them twelve small fish and a quantity of wine which, measured out in tiny rations, might conceivably last them for several days; but there were no lingering inhibitions or prejudices now, and the rigging of the mast was festooned with strips of flesh drying in the sun. To live, one must eat. . . .

And now they slept. Now they need no longer be everlastingly on the *qui-vive*. Now they could, at last, trust each other, and sleep. Of them all, it was doubtful whether a single one possessed sufficient strength to kill without weapons, with his bare hands. Therefore, that terror had been dispelled; there would be no more murders, no more slaughter.

No longer had they any consciousness of the days. They came, they passed. Night ended them, only to give way to a new day, and in the succession of the days there was no differentiation, nothing that could remind them that the days were passing except the slow and inevitable deterioration of their lot, the slow and inevitable approach of final disruption.

One day, some white butterflies appeared, like fairy spirits from another world. They came and alighted on the drooping sail. Minds, numbed by suffering, observed and registered, by degrees, the tidings those tiny messengers brought. The raft must be close to land!

Again, a seamew flew over them. Spirits rose, as sunken, burning eyes watched its easy flight. The coast was at hand! Soon now they would see the low line of the land, soon they would be clambering ashore through the breakers—safe—saved at last!

But the currents altered. Out at sea, they had set in towards the coast; closer inshore, they ran parallel, or set out to sea. The direction of the raft's drift changed again, but almost imperceptibly, for she had scarcely moved during many days now, since the wind dropped.

Hope died once more.

One of the officers spoke—the only man who achieved the immense triumph of speech that day.

"If the brig is sent to look for us," he croaked, with a terrible irony of despair, "pray God that they have Argus eyes. Or else . . ."

Captain Dupont, staggering to his feet, in the dawn, straightened abruptly, rubbing his eyes, refusing to believe what they told him. He stared away across the water and suddenly he became galvanised. He cried out:

"A sail! A sail on the horizon! A sail!"

The others, crowding round him, followed the direction of his pointing hand, blinking painfully, reminding themselves that this must be hallucination, this could not be real. They must not give themselves up once more to the madness of hallucinations. They were not to be deceived in such a fashion now.

But, as they looked, as they told themselves there could be no sail there, they saw, their eyes persisted with this message, and at last doubt fled, conviction came.

A ship! There she was, upon the horizon—veritably a ship! They were saved! Rescue was at hand.

Some of the men, not so completely dazed, not so overcome, rushed to attract the ship's attention. They piled empty barrels, they tied handkerchiefs of different colours to them. Coste, demanding the help of some of his comrades, attempted to climb the mast. They supported him; slowly, with imminent risk, he managed to reach the top. He seized the pennants and waved them frantically against the rising sun.

A half-hour of waiting, while the ship drew nearer, grew, became recognisable. The brig! It was the brig *Argus*, sent to search for them! They were really saved. Their miseries were ended, in a little while now they would be on the firm deck of the brig, they would be drinking, eating. . . .

"She's coming! She's coming! Look—she's getting nearer and nearer!"

A cheer went up, a hoarse, croaking outcry from parched and aching throats that had barely been able, for days, to articulate at all.

The cheer died away. Eyes, opening wide in surprise, in a flicker of apprehension, stared at the brig, fascinated; watched as she broke tack, as she put about, smoothly, easily, and spread her canvas on the opposite tack. Watched, with a slow torture of increasing despair, while she drove away from them, while she lessened in the distance; watched, until she was hull down, until only her topsails showed above the hard sharp line of the horizon. Watched even these sink out of sight and stared, blindly, uncomprehendingly, stupidly, upon an empty ocean.

Coste slid down the mast, let himself fall upon the deck.

"It's all over," he said, his voice breaking on a sob. "There's nothing more to do . . . except to die."

NEXT WEEK

In the Hands of the Moors

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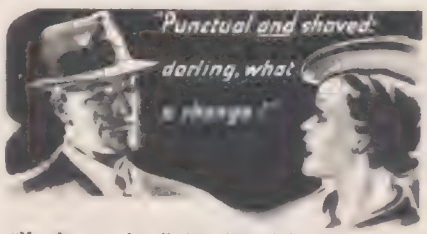

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JUST A LITTLE LOGIC

The horse and bear were chargin' past when I shot the second time—the fraction of an instant before Pete knocked the gun out of my hands

Pity poor Bruin, for he is the sad hero of this story about two men and a mustang who refused to believe about the benefits of civilisation

BY STEPHEN PHILLIPS

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

THE moon was dyin' as we clawed our way up the bluff, high up over the Flowers River. Empty an' quiet it was, with that queer moon fadin' out of the sky. The gnarled, black sinews of the bluff shone stark an' twisted, an' Pete was full of his favourite topic, cursin' an' gruntin' as he scrambled over the sharp, juttin' rocks an' boulders, with the valley below us lit by the eerie ghostlight of the early morning sky.

"Logic," he says, "is only another word for *sense*. An' sense ain't a quality possessed to any great extent by the human race. You've only got to look at the world as it is to-day to find *that* out, anyway. If only human bein's had as much logic inside 'em as *animals*. . . ."

As I clawed my way over a bad bit of rock, my boot came down on his fingers, an' he flared up at me as if I'd done it a-purpose.

"It's as quiet as the grave," I says, lyin' there, listenin'. "That mustang must have gone down through the canyon, I reckon."

"Well, there's logic for you," Pete grunted. "He just led us on, an' skirted the base of the bluff, while we've been scramblin' an' clawin' about like a couple of out-of-work clowns. As I'm always sayin'——"

"I know," I says; "'a little logic goes a long way.' But wasn't it Shakespeare who said somethin' about 'a little logic bein' *dangerous*'?"

"*Knowledge*," he says, pityingly, "was the word. You've got all your dates an' colours mixed, Cloudy. An' it wasn't Shakespeare. Nor even Francis Bacon."

"What's he got to do with it?" I says. "I never heard of him, anyway."

But suddenly, his eyes gleamin', Pete grabbed my arm.

"Listen," he breathed.

Out of the pale gloom of the mornin' a sound came up to us—the sound of drumming hooves on a hard, stony surface. Hooves flyin' hard an' mad, strikin' flame from the rock as they came. Through that narrow-walled canyon the thunder of his coming sounded like the charge of another Light Brigade.

As I listened, a sense of awe grew inside me. It ain't easy to describe what I felt in words. But for days—weeks, in fact—we'd trailed an' stalked this wild mustang, never gettin' close enough to him to snake a rope round his forelegs. The Flowers, in those times, was a lonely country, an' animals of that size were usually just as scarce as men—scarcer, in fact. Indian territory most of it used to be, an' maybe the strain of those fleet, sure-footed Indian ponies still lived on somewhere up in the hills or the empty-lookin' plains beyond.

Anyhow, we'd heard this mustang one dark night, poundin' down through Last Stand Canyon. A grim bit of scenery that was, too; no replica in miniature of the Grand Canyon, anyway. An' a grim history it had, as well; for ninety white men, settlers an' soldiers, with their kids an' womenfolk, had been slaughtered in that narrow defile, years ago.

Pete Horton an' me had worked the Flowers for years; huntin', trappin', even lookin' for gold more than once, though we'd never found any. In fact, the last winter up there had pretty nearly cooked our goose, as the sayin' goes. Even the smallest and least expensive fur-bearin' creatures were extraordinarily scarce. Our money had all gone, practically. Stores were runnin' low. Pete's face—an', even when things were goin' fine, it was never particularly happy-lookin'—was gettin' glummer an' glummer. . . .

"If our luck don't change soon," he'd kept on sayin', "we'll have to go back an' clerk on the railroad." We'd done that once, until Pete had got mixed up in an argument about the logic of shuntin' a goods train in order to let through a Pacific express. The goods was takin' food to the Irrewark Valley, which had been devastated by floods; an' the Pacific, Pete reckoned, was mostly filled with tired business-men an' their platinum-haired girl secretaries goin' to the summer coast resorts, an'—well, in the argument, Pete smashed a chair over somebody's head an' we had to get out quick. We was feelin' homesick, anyhow.

At first I hadn't taken much notice of the strange mustang, but I'd observed a look in Pete's face. He'd sat for a solid hour or more, chin in hand, not sayin' a word. "Things," he said at last, "is bad, mighty bad. We got to get some money from somewhere, Cloudy. Maybe there's other mustangs up on the Flowers. Maybe there's a whole *bunch* of 'em, just strayin' around. If so, an' we could catch this one, he might lead us to 'em."

"An' then what?" I says. Maybe, as Pete's always tellin' me, I'm a bit on the "dumb" side. Anyhow, with Pete havin' so much intelligence, there can't be much left over for the rest of humanity.

"Those mustangs would be worth a bit," he says. "Old Man Janes, over at Littlesnow, would just jump at the chance. . . ."

Yes, I've got to hand it to Pete. He *does* get ideas. The pity of it is that mostly they just remain—*ideas*.

Now, with that eerie sense of fear inside me, I lay up there, beside Pete, an' listened to those poundin' hooves.

"He ought to pass just underneath us," Pete says. "Got that rope handy?"

I got on my knees, peerin' into the mornin' gloom. I lifted the coil an' slickered out the noose a little.

"Here he comes," Pete said, suddenly; an' then we both saw him—though merely a plungin', snortin' shape in the gloom, his eyes rollin' white and strange, the sparks flyin' under him. I swung the lassoo. The rope snaked out and down. The dust rose up from the narrow trail beneath us. Next instant, I gasped in

(*please turn to page* 36)

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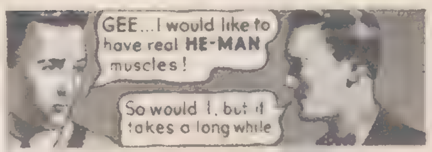

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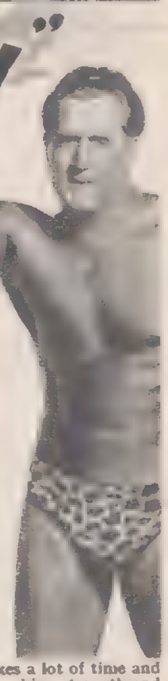

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sheer dismay an' Pete snapped out a furious curse. The mustang stopped dead, jerkin' back, the dust-clouds risin'. Then he leaped—an' I never saw a horse, wild or otherwise, jump like it in my life. Pete reckoned, bein' wild, he'd sensed his danger quicker than any tamed animal would have done.

Anyhow, he was flyin' through the air, an' as he flew we saw somethin' else just behind him. A *shape*. . . . In the deeper shadow of the canyon wall it hung an instant, then seemed to lumber on in pursuit of the mustang, who was now beatin' a devil's tattoo on the flinty canyon floor, speedin' like the wind from us.

Pete jumped up an' shook me.

"What was that thing, that *shape*?" he stammered, nervously.

I didn't know. I said as much to Pete as I started to re-coil the darned rope. Pete began cursin' again in that rather nervous fashion.

"We'll never get him," he said. "He's too darned clever for us. Animals always are too darned clever for humans. They've got more sense, more *logic*. . . . It's only the use of *weapons* which have given man his so-called superiority over the brute world."

"Okay," I says. "But man must have had the sense an' logic to invent such weapons, else why didn't the brute world do it first?"

Pete gave me a pityin' sort of look, so that I felt rather like a worm which had been trodden on suddenly. Then he began clawin' his way down from the bluff, me followin' more slowly.

"Soon as it's light enough," he says, "we'll pick up his trail again. He ain't goin' to have the laugh on us without a fight."

We trudged back, skirtin' the bluff, to our shack in Lumber Creek. It was a warm, clear mornin' by that time. The deep green of summer was spreadin' even to Last Stand Canyon, an' the Flowers River gleamed deep an' still, with the marble white of the canyon shinin' in it. We had breakfast, Pete moanin' most of the time because the canned tomatoes had run out; canned tomatoes was Pete's rulin' passion.

Pete got busy making a second lassoo. I just hung about an' watched the sun on the hills. I was rememberin' an old Indian trick; Old Waterway Kilihuan, the trapper out by Blast Bend Strike, had told me about it. So I got down my rifle and loaded it. Pete says suddenly: "What's the idea? We ain't goin' *shootin'* nothin'."

"Oh, yes, we *are*," I says with a grin. It was good to feel a real sense of superiority, anyhow.

"What d'you aim to shoot, Cloudy?"

"A horse," I says.

"*Horse?*" Pete jumped up in a temper. "Listen, Cloudy, this ain't no time for jokes."

"I ain't jokin', Pete. Didn't you never hear tell of what the Indians used to do when they wanted to catch a wily mustang—an' couldn't trap him any how else?"

"Well, what *did* they do?" he asks, with a stare.

I picked up my gun.

"Come on," I says, "an' I'll show you."

We went down through the canyon. The sun had got blazin' got. In places, the grass was already beginnin' to go brown an' wither. We went along the bank of the Flowers an' picked up the trail out by Dropped Match. Past Indian Hat we trailed that mustang, right round the base of Massacre Bluff an' back again, until we were wet with perspiration.

I looked at the sun, blazin' rusty red on the plains below, an' thought of the time, years ago, when I'd trailed that killer wolf right the way to Red Gully to spurt lead into him. A trail of vengeance it had been. My dog, Bruce, old and sick, had fought that wolf at the shack door for an hour or more, but the beast had got him in the end. . . . Poor old Bruce. I'd liked him a heap, an' it felt like a knife turnin' in my heart when I saw him lyin' there, stiff an' dead in the sun. . . .

"There he is," Pete snapped out suddenly, an' we both dropped flat as pancakes, strainin' our eyes.

Sure enough, there he was, standin' patient an' still, near a pool of deep green water. We crept to windward, like stalkin' Redskins, Pete's breath hissin' between his teeth. Closer, closer, closer, until we could see his eyes, all aglow with strength an' vitality. Never have I set eyes on a more beautiful-lookin' creature. An' I raised the gun an' started to aim, while Pete, not understandin' at all, made faces at me. Just as I got my eye on the sights, the mustang must have scented us, even against the wind. He gave a violent shudder, as if a powerful electric current had swept through him, leapin' round, plungin', ready to tear away again. . . .

But this time he was too late. I fired and he dropped as if he'd been hit with a sledgehammer.

"Jumpin' cats!" Pete yelled, "you've killed him!"

But I hadn't done that. I'd aimed at his neck an' the bullet had struck there, just near the spine, stunnin' him. The Injuns used to have ideas at times. We had him hog-tied an' helpless by the time he came round. Pete was jubilant. We took him back and got him into the big shed attached to the shack, but it wasn't easy. He fought and kicked an' bit all the time. He was a real savage, I reckon.

Pete, however, knew somethin' about horses. He'd "ridden cattle" once. An' White Mornin', as we named him, was but a means to an end, anyhow. Pete was sure there must be others up in the hills somewhere. An' they'd fetch good prices, if we could only locate the herd.

We were sittin' there, talkin' things over, when we heard the sound of runnin' feet an' a man's voice—Herder's voice, it was. Herder came through Last Stand Canyon once a month with the mail, generally stoppin' the night at our shack. Pete got up an' flung open the door—an' there was this feller, Herder, runnin' for his life, *with a big black bear lumberin' behind him.*

I never saw anythin' quite so funny in my life. Pete grabbed a gun, but I snatched it away from him before he could shoot. It may sound mighty queer to you, but I was always rather partial to bears—ever since the time I got stuck up that tree in Shawl Hollow, with an old she-bear waitin' below. I stayed up there all night, shiverin' with fright—an' when I came down, desperate, all she did was to follow me all the way home, *sniffin'*. I found, next day, I was smothered with honey. Got it out of the tree, I daresay, where a honey-bird must have been storin' the stuff.

"Give me that gun," Pete says. "What the blazes d'you think you're doin'?"

I cocked an eye at the bear.

"He looks harmless enough," I says.

"*Harmless*," Pete snorted, an' tried to shut the door, but the bear got there first, with Herder, white-faced, leanin' against the shack wall, yellin' at me to shoot. . . .

I kept the gun ready, of course. But I needn't have bothered. Because, after standin' an' blinkin' at us in sleepy curiosity, Mister Bruin sat himself down on our home porch an' went to sleep. . . .

Even then Pete wasn't satisfied. He was scared of bears, anyway.

"He's all right," I says. "He's as friendly as friendly—an' far less dangerous than a 'killer' horse, anyhow."

That started another argument because Pete was mighty fond of horses. He said it had been a cruel thing to shoot a horse, even the way I'd shot White Mornin'.

"No more cruel," I says, heatedly, "than shootin' an inoffensive old bear."

An' as things turned out, Mister Bruin was the most inoffensive creature imaginable. He'd come down from the hills, we supposed; but it was mighty odd the way he lingered, never strayin' far from the shack. But some excitement started a few mornings later, when we brought White Mornin' from the shed. The bear got up as hurriedly as bears can do, and started to lumber forward. Pete shouted to me to keep him away from the mustang. The horse shied and screamed, as horses do, with sudden fear.

Kickin' an' plungin', he dragged Pete first one way, then another. Mister Bruin, after pausin' an' lookin' on with considerable surprise an' bewilderment, ventured even closer. It *did* look, just then, as if he intended to leap upon the mustang's back. Pete, sweatin' with fright, got there first, hangin' on tooth an' nail, an' the last I saw of either of 'em was White Mornin' tearin' madly into the gloom of the canyon, with Pete clingin' to his back like a glued-on jockey. I never thought Pete was such a rider until that day.

More surprisin' still, Mister Bruin would have followed them if I hadn't headed him off. With sundry disappointed grunts, he lay down close beside me, almost like a dog. Somehow, as I looked at him, the hurt, puzzled expression in his tiny eyes reminded me of a look I'd seen sometimes in Bruce's. It's funny the way we took to each other, right from the start, Mister Bruin an' me. But don't get to thinkin' he was any *ordinary* bear. He wasn't.

He'd got a cut on one of his legs an' I washed it for him an' he never moved or made a sound, except a grunt or two, which I took to mean he was grateful for what I'd done. Oh, yes, he surprised *me*, even. But I never let on to Pete about that, just took it all as a matter of course, which seemed to bewilder and irritate Pete almost beyond endurance at times, because he just couldn't make head or tail of it.

"'T ain't natural," he said huffily, "for a bear to act the way he does."

"You don't understand," I says, grinnin' an' puttin' out my hand to shake his big paw, "me an' bears is just like that."

"You don't think," Pete asks, all of a sudden, "it was *him* we saw that mornin' in the canyon, chasin' the horse?"

OLD BILL AND BERT — by BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

Discovering You

RESERVATION FORMS for THE PASSING SHOW's wonderful "Live Successfully," which appeared in the special four-page inset in last week's PASSING SHOW, must be received by not later than Tuesday next, June 28.

The course, that in the ordinary way would cost £5 5s., consists of twelve valuable little books, which reveal step by step the secrets of the art of living.

The first book, entitled, *How to Discover the Real You*, will be sent to you immediately on receipt of the Reservation Forms. The remaining eleven books will follow, one every two weeks.

Look up the forms in the special inset in last week's PASSING SHOW and post them to-day. Remember: the last day for receipt of the Reservation Forms is Tuesday next, June 28.

"It *did* occur to me," I admitted.

"But why should the bear follow him down here, Cloudy?"

"Beats me," I said; it *did*.

"Anyhow," Pete says, in that huffy and surprised manner, "you'd better keep him away from White Mornin', else there's likely to be trouble."

"Somehow," I says, "I don't think Mister Bruin means him any harm."

"I don't like the way that bear looks at him," Pete snapped.

But I couldn't see anythin' wrong in Mister Bruin's expression. Certainly, he *did* seem to take a mighty strange interest in White Mornin'. It was a job to keep him away from the horse at times. But as for *attackin'* White Mornin'—well, I reckoned Pete was off his rocker ever to think of it.

Although I pretended to accept Mister Bruin's attitude as a matter of course, I was actually just as puzzled by it as Pete himself. But it was good to be able to give him something to wonder at.

Naturally, we had to take certain precautions with Mister Bruin, despite his quite obvious friendliness. Pete, at any rate, insisted on that; so, at night, we chained Mister Bruin to the trunk of a near-by tree, using the same strong chain, doubled, which I had used for Bruce on the rare occasions on which I had chained him up. Pete had a morbid fear that we should both be murdered in our sleep one night. I believe, if I hadn't restrained him, he'd have shot Mister Bruin out of hand. But I'd got rather fond of him, much as a town or city man might become attached to an attentive, faithful dog. After all, I've known bears so harmless that little children could frolic with them in perfect safety.

When I mentioned this to Pete, he grunted and said surlily: "Maybe, *tamed* bears. . . . Not bears that come walkin' down out of the hills, like this one did."

"He's so harmless," I says, "I'd let him sleep at the foot of my bed at night."

Pete shivered.

But, oddly enough, I never got to like White Mornin' much. That's funny, too; or *isn't* it? Maybe it was because White Mornin' never really cottoned on to me. Whenever he looked in my direction, a sort of reddish colour came into his eyes.

An' that ought to have warned me, too; but it didn't. It just shows how clever a man can be in some ways, an' how darned stupid in others. Because when I went into the shed that evening to feed and water him, Pete havin' the rheumatism pretty bad, I was really forewarned. Once or twice, before that night, we'd tried to take him back towards the hills, in the hope that he might lead us to the secret hidin' place of the wild herd. Pete always insisted that the herd existed somewhere in the hills.

As I went towards the shed, I saw Herder coming up from the river, the mail-bag slung over his shoulder.

"Take the newspapers into Pete," I says. "Maybe they'll help to make him better tempered."

The shed was pretty dark. Usually White Mornin' was tied with a rope. Pete saw to that as a rule. But that night, bein' in such pain with his rheumatism, I suppose Pete had neglected to do it. Anyhow, the moment I flung open the door I realised that the horse wasn't tied. He flung round at me, his eyes rolled, white and savage and terrifyin' in the darkness, an' suddenly his head came down and his [redacted] my shoulder. . . .

I reeled back against the shed wall, sick and dizzy—an' scared. My shoulder felt as if it had been torn off, almost. He lashed out at me, splinterin' the timber wall as if it were made of matchwood. I jumped under his flyin' hooves and leapt out of the door, an' he gave an almost human scream of rage and came after me like a savage. . . .

Of course, he *remembered*. I'd *hurt* him. Hurt him pretty badly when I'd knocked him over with that bullet. An' he was out for *murder*.

As I came out of the shed doorway, almost on all fours, I noticed Mister Bruin, lumberin' curiously towards us. But I didn't take a lot of notice of him at the time. I was too intent on saving what was left of my own skin. I ran, helter-skelter, into the shack an' Pete jumped up so suddenly that the table was knocked over. Pete was gripping one of the papers an' he was shoutin' somethin' at me, but his shouts were drowned suddenly by the terrified squeal of the horse outside. . . .

That squeal froze the blood in my veins.

Grabbing a gun, I rushed outside, the blood streamin' from my shoulder.

I heard Pete rush after me, shoutin' like a madman.

When I looked, I saw the horse. . . .

Kickin', he was; kickin' like a devil, his eyes rollin', bloodshot an' wild with terror now. . . .

He rolled over on the ground.

Got up, lashin', *with Mister Bruin on his back*. . . .

I shot, almost blindly, swayin' there in the doorway. *Missed*. . . . The horse and the bear were chargin' past when I shot the second time—the fraction of an instant before Pete, still shoutin', knocked the gun out of my hands.

Mister Bruin crashed to the ground, dead as a doornail.

White Mornin' went on runnin'; for all I know, he's runnin' still. . . .

"You fool!" Pete shrieked at me. "What did you do that for?"

"What—what do you mean?" I says, huskily.

Pete gives a bitter little laugh.

"A good dose of logic," says he, "that's what the human race needs, far more'n pills an' headache-powders. You trailed that wolf across the plains an' pumped it full of lead because it had killed your dog, didn't you? Well, that poor damned bear was only tryin' to avenge your hurts, I reckon. Animals have got logic. Human bein's *ain't*. I'm always tellin' you that, Cloudy. . . ."

Open-mouthed, I sat and stared at him.

"I—I never thought of that," I says.

"Of course you didn't think," he says. "That's the trouble with most human bein's. They're too darned *lazy* to think. Or maybe," he added, in a fresh burst of temper, "the bear wasn't even tryin' to hurt the horse. Maybe, animal-like, he was just goin' through his *paces*—his *tricks*——"

"What the hell are you talkin' about?" I shouts at him savagely.

"Here," says he, as he pushes a paper towards me, "just read that."

I looked at the paper.

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"That's what made him follow White Mornin'," Pete says, in a dispirited voice. "He must have made his way into the hills, an', bein' used to horses. . . . We might have been the richer by a thousand dollars to-night if only you——

"I know," I says in a tired voice—"if only I'd used a little logic. But I ain't a killer horse. nor even a performin' bear. I'm only a human bein'."

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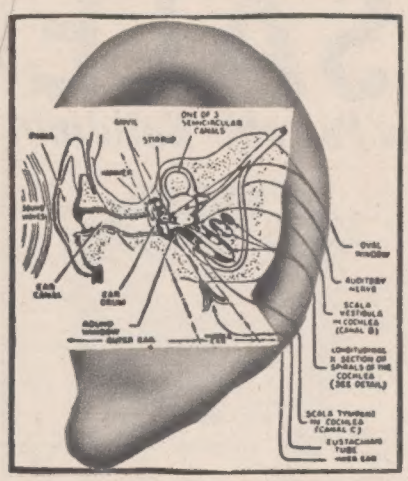

Diagram showing the intricate working of the ear.

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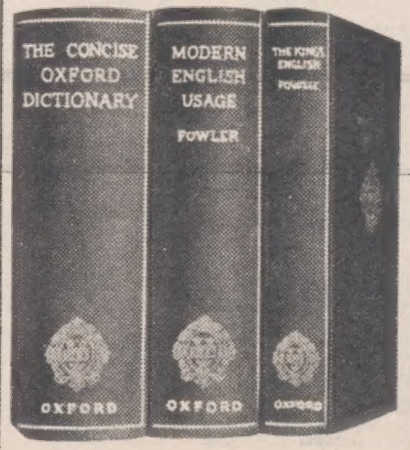

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NEXT WEEK

IN case you are puzzled, we will explain at once that the photograph above depicts the chest of a steam-roller. We could also, were we so minded, tell you why the said chest carries the figure of a prancing horse; but just to excite your curiosity, we won't.

You'll know the answer next week when you read that delightful story "Carried Away By A Dream" by Francis Foster. You will learn, also, that the good Father and Longshanks drove a run-away steam-roller up hill and down dale, to the embarrassment of the world at large.

We, ourselves, and we admit it sadly, have never ridden on a steam-roller. But if this should meet the eye of any lonely steam-roller driver, we here and now declare our willingness to work our passage across any county south of the Thames.

Last time we met him, Father Francis broke down under our searching cross-examination and confessed that he *has* driven a steam-roller on more than one occasion.

Lucky Father Francis! And lucky you who have the story of his steam-roller exploits yet to read.

THRICE fortunate you, because next week's issue is our enlarged Summer Number—price twopence, as usual—and the Longshanks' story is only one of many good things in store.

There is a new Hector adventure by Augustus Muir, another Postman story by Dale Collins, and a gem of a yarn by S. L. Bensusan. The second instalment of W. J. Passingham's serial is billed with intriguing surprises, whilst "They Sailed for Senegal" moves swiftly towards a sensational climax.

WILL Scott, paying one of his infrequent visits to town, called to tell us (*a*) about his kitchen garden, thirty feet by three; (*b*) a wicked story about a Scotsman who went to heaven; (*c*) the plot of a new "nine-fifteen" adventure; (*d*) the plot of a highly ingenious detective mystery; and (*e*) the outline of another good story.

Unless his vegetable crop fails entirely, we hope to give you the benefit of (*c*), (*d*) and (*e*) before many months have passed.

YOU'RE TELLING US!

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss

OUR considered opinion is that Bumble would have failed as an editor because he did not hold with pampering and you know what modern readers are. Imagine "The Bounty" as a magazine, edited by Captain Bligh (R.N., retired). There would have been a mutiny amongst his readers ere ever the first issue was out of print.

Contrariwise, what an editor King Midas might have made if his golden touch had been transferable. Even the pampered public of to-day could hardly have grudged paying twopence for a paper that turned to pure gold in their hands. Or could they?

On second thoughts, we fear that a peep at the post-bag of editor Midas would reveal some disquietening communications. For example, a postcard (anon.) from Aberdeen saying simply: "What! No Diamonds?" Or a threatening letter from a firm of solicitors whose client, Mrs. Hemmingway, has cut her finger on page sixteen of the current issue. Or an indignant letter from Bootle complaining about the "nasty, yellow colour" of the paper.

FOR nobody can please everybody. Readers like Mr. Denton, of London, N.W.1., don't happen very often nowadays. Sings Mr. Denton: "Whilst others golf or drive or punt or row, I take mine ease and read THE PASSING SHOW: How, Louis now returned and safely crowned, De Chaumareys for Senegal is bound—Incompetent, at all advisers mocks and piles his hapless frigate on the rocks. Then Sweeney in 'Love Wears a Mortar Board' tells how young Bilkins o'er his master scored; whilst Hortle tried to teach him French in vain, love made him master of the tongue of Spain. Will Scott relates how, on the Nine-fifteen, Old Wetherby long after death is seen; a mystery where Scotland Yard goes wrong, solved by the simple sense of John the Long. Francis, the Priest, where murder foul has been, senses the murd'rer's spirit o'er the scene. A champion wins by losing of a race; then comes a good tale of a Grub-stakes Case; Stories of Sinbad; Gerald on the Test; Eloise and Pat, two of the best. Last, but not least, there comes Virginia Hall, the

ladies' fav'rite. Now I've got them all."

Careful, Mr. Denton! Editors are so little used to kindness that letters such as yours throw them off guard and make them easy prey for more normal correspondents like Mr. Dixon, of Derby, who opines:

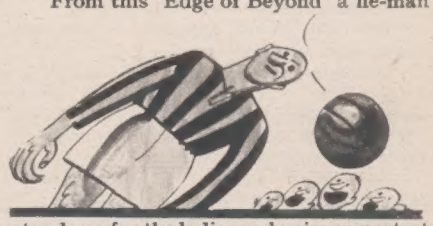
"Your serials are the utterest tosh and that statement has behind it four years of experience as a subscriber. As for Will Scott, just hog-tie him to Francis Foster and Frank King, and dump them in the river. Bensusan (3-star,) Newton, Horsler, and Wee Hector, that's what we want, with more about music and the men who wrote it; also stories of the operas.

"And lately, through the office door agape, came stealing through the dusk an angel shape—none other than Peter Fabrizius. Whatever you do, don't let him go back to obscurity. He's a definite asset to your paper."

That's the kind of letter we rather like, because it does the writer good to get it out of his system, and it does no harm to anybody, not even the authors treated so cavalierly, as we have hundreds of letters in our files praising those same authors in no uncertain fashion.

Passing on to Mr. C. Baxter, of Petersburg, South Africa, we are told:

"From this 'Edge of Beyond' a he-man



stands up for the ladies and voices a protest against your remarks upon "Ladies' make-up" in THE PASSING SHOW of 23/4/38.

"The poor things have to do it, for up here in the wilds we know the difficulties of big-game hunting:

The cult of beauty, as you say,
Is rather overdone;
But do you go out shooting
Without powder for your gun?
And when you go a-fishing,
Do you not bait the hook,
And give its nasty, cruel barbs
A nicer, kinder look?
It's the same with husband hunting,
For unless they use good bait,
The poor girls have not got a hope
Of catching a "Soul-mate."

"Now I hope you will be more reasonable and treat the sacred rites of beauty culture with more respect in future."

MR. C. FOGG, of Dagenham, has a good story to tell: "In these days of rush and tear, a little humour is most welcome. So I have decided to pass on a gem to you.

"I was playing football on our local ground and, as it was wet, the ball was very greasy. In the opposing team was a player whose head was bald as a billiard ball. During the play the ball was lofted in his direction; he rose to meet it with his head, but, owing to his lack of hair, did not connect properly and the ball slithered off. This was too much for one of our forwards, who shouted: 'Why on earth don't you put more chalk on your cue?' Naturally, Baldy didn't like that and a free fight followed. Believe me, it certainly livened up a rather dull game."

For a tail-piece we select a cryptic letter from Mr. W. J. Robinson, of Burton-on-Trent: "I was pleased," he informs us, "to see a relative of yours win the 2.30 at Birmingham yesterday. I am indebted to you for the inspiration."

Any to come, glad of it, as they used to say in our battalion, Mr. Robinson.

For Your Amusement

CLUES ACROSS

1. Perhaps a picture.
9. Fine as a Scot may say.
13. Occupying chair, possibly.
14. A drug.
16. Real bonus (anagram).
18. Make recompense.
19. Spirit of a man.
20. From Denmark.
21. Opens 16 across.
22. Get away.
25. Some birds have this termination.
27. Dig in old-fashioned way.
29. Gain by labour.
31. Outcome.
32. Essential part of Unitarian (hidden).
33. Seen at the Zoo.
34. Schemes, perhaps on paper.
37. A water course.
38. Cover.
39. ... colour.
40. Means of conveyance.
42. Rooms at the top.
43. May be a circuit.
44. Northern river.

CLUES DOWN

2. Quadrupeds.
3. Certainly not gross.
4. Move quickly.
5. Not ligitimately acquired.
6. Heavenly connection here.
7. It's a girl either way.
8. She is or was another.
9. Thin nail.
10. To rate for turn.
11. Briefly nameless.
12. Decline or weaken.
15. See less in these.
16. Does not seek monetary reward.
17. Stewed.
23. As in cap (anagram).
24. In addition.
25. Ruffle.
26. Horn branch.
28. O slave thou art edible thus.
30. Aromatic plant.
34. Remove thin slice or layer.
35. Rule broken in this.
36. Sounds like 3 down but may be a catch.
39. A bit of material.
41. Only half don...

C	L	A	I	M	A	N	T	■	S	L	E	P	T	■
R	E	N	T	E	R	■	E	S	T	I	M	A	T	E
E	A	T	I	N	G	■	M	O	R	R	O	W	■	N
A	V	E	N	U	E	■	P	L	E	A	T	S	■	C
M	E	R	E	■	N	E	E	D	S	■	I	■	A	■
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G	L	O	A	T	■	S	A	V	E	■	N	A	V	E
R	A	M	R	O	D	■	T	I	D	E	■	D	I	D
A	T	■	I	M	A	G	E	S	■	R	A	I	N	■
C	E	D	E	■	D	■	A	■	S	P	A	C	E	■
E	R	O	S	I	O	N	■	S	T	E	L	E	■	■

Solution to last week's puzzle.

P.S. GOLDEN CIRCLE 25-6-38

B247 ★ 6 ★

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NO AILMENT resulting from poor or sluggish circulation of the blood can resist the curative action of Elasto. Varicose veins are restored to a healthy condition, the heart becomes steady, the arteries supple, skin troubles clear up, leg ulcers (bad leg) heal naturally *and the cure is lasting*, piles vanish, and rheumatism in all its forms is literally swept out of the system. This is not magic, *although the relief does seem magical* it is the natural result of revitalised blood and improved circulation brought about by *Elasto*, the *Wonderful New Biomedical Remedy*.

Twelve Thousand Miles of Blood Vessels!

VIGOROUSLY circulating, healthy blood, rich in vital properties, is the physical basis of life and health. The importance of the circulatory system may be judged from the fact that if the veins, arteries and capillaries, the blood channels, were to be set end to end, they would extend to the incredible distance of twelve thousand miles: *Sufficient to stretch half-way round the world.* Bearing this startling fact in mind, it becomes obvious that a stagnating bloodstream is a very serious thing; it is, in fact, associated with many obstinate and troublesome ailments—varicose veins, bad leg, rheumatism, piles, hardened arteries, heart weakness, to name but a few of the numerous " symptoms " of bad circulation. Now in order to deal successfully with " symptoms " it is essential to first remove the *cause* of them. Elasto does this in thorough and logical manner by restoring muscular tone to the heart and elasticity to the veins and arteries, thereby re-establishing normal, healthy circulation; *the real basis of all healing.*

Not a Drug, but a Vital Cell-food!

Elasto is not a drug, but a vital cell-food. Prepared in small, delicate tablets, by a special process, it dissolves instantly on the tongue and is absorbed directly into the blood. Every sufferer should test this wonderful new Biomedical remedy which quickly brings ease and comfort and creates within the system a new health force; stimulating the growth of new healthy tissue-cells, to replace worn-out and disease-damaged tissues, increasing vitality and arousing to full activity the inherent healing forces of the body. Nothing even remotely resembling Elasto has ever been offered to the general public before; it makes you look and feel years younger, and it is the pleasantest, the cheapest and the most effective remedy ever devised.

Read what Users of Elasto say—

" I have suffered years of agony with varicose veins and phlebitis but thanks to Elasto, my leg is now completely cured."
" My Doctor highly praises Elasto."
" Varicose veins quickly cured after 12 years of useless bandaging."
" Now walk long distances with ease."
" Had rheumatism so badly I could hardly walk, but Elasto cured me."
" I attribute my recovery from rheumatoid arthritis solely to Elasto."
" Now free from Piles."
" Suffered for years from a weak heart, but Elasto cured me."
" After being indoors for 18 months, I can now walk quite well. My heart is stronger and all the pain has left my legs."
" Elasto has cured my bad leg."
" The swelling from ankles to thighs has entirely gone, and I can do a full day's work keeping on my legs all day."
" No sign of varicose veins now."
" The stinging sensation I used to get in my left arm and leg (arterio-sclerosis) is quite gone and my general health is much improved."
" My skin is as soft as velvet, thanks to Elasto."
" It is wonderful to be free from that terrible pain and to be able to walk upstairs without getting short of breath."
" I was in awful agony and could not walk. My family and friends are astounded; the results are magic."
" I was in terrible agony with arthritis, almost crippled, but Elasto cured me."
" Rheumatoid arthritis gone. I have never felt better."
" Lumbago cured after three years of suffering, age 66."
" Cured my sciatica 12 months ago, still quite fit."
" No pain or swelling in my legs now. I think it is wonderful after being unable to get about for two years."
" I was confined to my bed with phlebitis, without hope of ever getting out again. My doctor says I owe my life to Elasto."
" Elasto has quite cured my eczema."
" My piles are gone, my legs are better and I feel better in my general health."
" Thrombosis gone; legs better, less swelling."

Etc., Etc.

Here's Good News! You Can Test Elasto Free!

How Elasto achieves such remarkable results is fully explained in the Elasto Booklet, which contains information of vital importance to every sufferer. It tells of highly successful research work in the field of curative, nutritional science, and traces a large group of obstinate ailments to their initial cause—a faulty bloodstream. A copy of this invaluable Booklet and a Free Sample of Elasto will be sent post free in exchange for the coupon below. ELASTO (Dept. 152), CECIL HOUSE, HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON, E.C.

Why is Elasto the Greatest of all Remedies For RHEUMATISM?

Because rheumatism is a *circulatory disease* and the treatment usually given for this widespread complaint is merely designed to counteract acidity. It is a physiological fact, not generally recognised, that a sluggish circulation, causing, as it does, a *deficiency of oxygen* in the blood and tissues and thus allowing an accumulation of toxic, waste material, is the real cause of rheumatism. Elasto re-establishes normal, healthy circulation and in doing so removes not only the symtoms, *but the cause of rheumatism.*

COUPON *for Free Trial Sample of Elasto*

ELASTO (Dept. 152), Cecil House, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. ★

Please send me Free Sample and Special Free Booklet, " The Story of Elasto," fully explaining how Elasto, *The Great Blood Revitaliser*, cures through the blood.

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Illustrated below — Watendlath, a beautiful hamlet near Keswick. "Player's" can be purchased at this old house which is reputed to be the home of Judith Paris, the heroine in Sir Hugh Walpole's novel of that name.

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